

# new trends in adult education

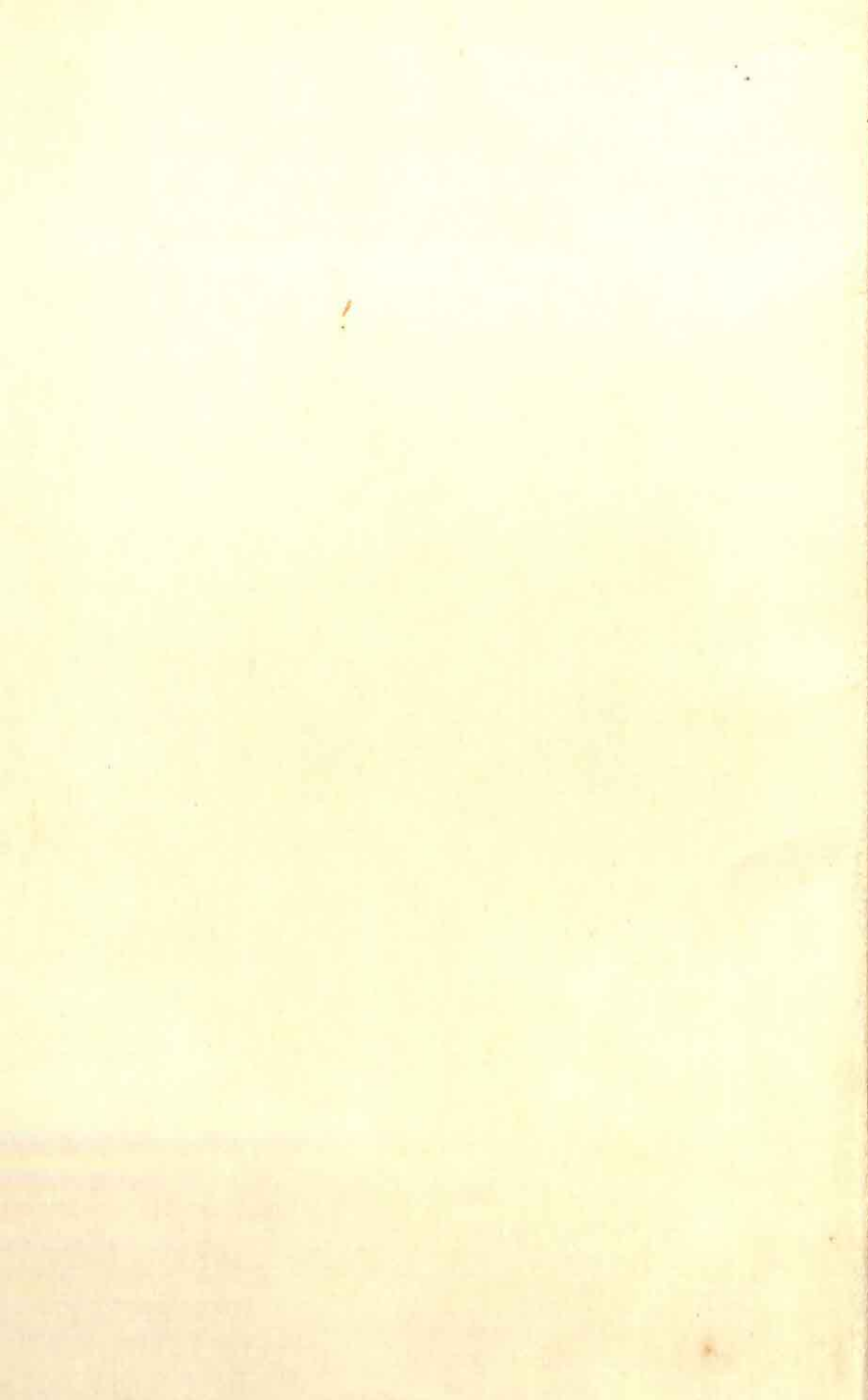
by a. s. m. hely

from elsinore to montreal

monographs on education

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# NEW TRENDS IN ADULT EDUCATION

FROM ELSINORE TO MONTREAL

by A. S. M. HELY



UNESCO

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## P R E F A C E

*Unesco has been concerned, throughout its existence, with adult education and has undertaken each year a wide range of projects intended to foster international thought and action in this field. These have met with an encouraging response both from the governments of Member States and from the non-governmental organizations which are in many countries the mainstay of the adult education movement.*

*Amongst the more significant of these interventions of Unesco was the organization, in 1949, of an International Conference on Adult Education at Elsinore (Denmark) and, in 1960, of the World Conference on Adult Education in Montreal (Canada). Between these two events great changes had taken place in the world and are continuing to take place with increasing rapidity. The adult education movement is responding to these changes by a greatly accelerated development which calls for both expansion and concentration of Unesco's programme in this field.*

*Some of the activities of Unesco, variously described in the past as adult education, workers' education and fundamental education, have been linked with programmes in different countries of the world with an even greater variety of names such as mass education, popular education, social education and community development. This diversity of aims and names has enlarged and enriched the experience of Unesco at the cost of some dispersion of its resources. Since 1960, however, the term 'fundamental education' has been gradually eliminated from the Unesco vocabulary, a single Division of Adult Education and Youth Activities has been established in the Secretariat, an inter-departmental committee has been set up by the Director-General to knit together the activities of the different departments and services of Unesco which contribute to adult education and finally, an International Committee for the Advancement of Adult Education, with 24 members drawn from all parts of the world, has been brought together to advise the Director-General and to work with Unesco for the promotion of adult education in Member States. These developments have been in large measure the result of the world conference of Montreal and a response to the rapid evolution of the adult education movement.*



*To place on record this vital period in the history of adult education between the conferences of Elsinore and Montreal, Unesco asked Mr. Arnold S. M. Hely, Director of Adult Education at the University of Adelaide (Australia), to write this book. Unesco wishes to take the opportunity of expressing its gratitude to Mr. Hely for undertaking this very difficult task, and feels confident that adult educators in all parts of the world will find his work a valuable basis for study and planning.*

*Opinions expressed in this book are naturally those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of Unesco.*

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	9
CHAPTER I. The nature and scope of adult education .	15
CHAPTER II. Elsinore—the background and the tasks .	21
CHAPTER III. Change in the industrially developed countries . . . . .	37
CHAPTER IV. Change in the underdeveloped countries .	45
CHAPTER V. From 'continuing' education to 'continuous' education . . . . .	56
CHAPTER VI. Montreal—tasks of adult education . .	71
CHAPTER VII. Machinery for international co-operation and consultation . . . . .	92
CHAPTER VIII. Structure and organization . . . .	101
CHAPTER IX. Forms and methods of adult education .	118
CHAPTER X. Conclusion . . . . .	130
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	134



## INTRODUCTION

On 22 August 1960, delegates of 51 countries and representatives of 46 international organizations gathered in Moyse Hall, McGill University, Montreal, for the opening meeting of a 10-day conference on adult education. This was the second such conference to be organized by Unesco. The first was held 11 years earlier, in June 1949, at the International People's College of Elsinore in Denmark. Eleven years is not a great interval, even in terms of the relatively brief history of organized adult education, yet there are times when a given number of years, months, weeks or even hours, seems longer in relation to any similar period in the past, simply because more things are happening and more changes are taking place. Like the fluctuating hours of the complex ancient Egyptian water-clocks, time-units seem to have the capacity to vary their lengths.

The fifties represented such a period. This was a decade in which the accumulating forces of change seemed to burst their bounds with all the characteristics and speed of an uncontrolled chain reaction. The first 50 years of the twentieth century had hammered home with ever-quickenings blows the fact that change was to be not only a permanent feature of man's environment but probably its most characteristic feature. The last decade has indicated that change itself is subject to a law of constant acceleration.

The curve of change seems to be rising more and more steeply like a parabolic curve (e.g., 1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36...). Each increment is not only larger but exceeds the previous increment by a greater amount. Change takes place at a faster and faster rate. There has been more change in the last 10 years than in the preceding 50 and more in those 50 years than in the previous 200. This increasing rapidity is a result of the accelerating tempo of scientific and technological developments. These developments, in their turn, rest upon the discovery of new knowledge. Once it is recog-



nized that change is to be permanent and that it is subject to constant and rapid acceleration based upon fresh knowledge, its implications in terms of education become clear. It is no longer possible, no matter how thorough the instruction given them, to equip young people during childhood, adolescence or early manhood to meet all the problems they are likely to face as adults. Society will be fluid and changing even as people take up their responsibilities as citizens in the adult community. The community, under the impact of scientific and technological change, may be fundamentally altered not once, but twice, or even three times within the life-span of a single person.

There are many individuals living today, even in the technically advanced countries, who, though not old in today's terms, were born before the motorcar became more than a rare oddity. Their life has spanned the transition from sail to steam, from motor power to nuclear propulsion. Their childhood was spent in a world which did not know films, radio, television, automation, jet propulsion or nuclear reactors. Most of these changes took place in a short span of 50 years when the rate of change was relatively moderate. If man is to understand the changes which are taking place today and the problems they create, if he is to have the knowledge which will enable him to control their effects, he must recognize that his education can never be complete. Education can no longer be confined to a limited period of formal schooling in childhood and youth.

Changes in society and its needs, based on new knowledge, will eventually result in changes in the nature, scope and pattern of education in schools. But there is a time-lag before change affects formal education and a further time-lag before the schools produce a generation of young adults equipped with the new knowledge. Training and preparation for membership of the community are always at least a generation behind contemporary needs. Educational opportunities to assist adults to meet these contemporary problems become essential to compensate for this scientific and cultural lag.

That part of education which takes place after formal schooling is over, whether such schooling ends with primary education or includes secondary or tertiary education, is the concern of adult education. It would be foolish to suggest that adult education is of significance only now, when the rate of change is accelerating at a pace unknown to past generations. It has long been recognized that many of the problems faced by adults in a modern society require knowledge which cannot be acquired in youth. Throughout adult life, even in a society where change takes place



at a modest rate, there is a constant need for individual adjustment to vocational responsibilities, to marriage, parenthood and to social and political responsibility. These adjustments involve aspects of education which cannot have any real meaning until the individual is an adult and a mature member of society.

Robert Hutchins, in an address given at the University of Illinois in 1947, said: 'It happens that the kind of things we need most to understand today are those which only adults can fully grasp. A boy may be a brilliant mathematician or musician and I have known several astronomers who were contributing to the international journals at the age of 13. But I never knew a child of that age who had much that was useful to say about the ends of human life, the purposes of organized society, and the means of reconciling freedom and order. It is subjects like these about which we are most confused and about which we must obtain some clarification if our civilization is to survive.'<sup>1</sup>

For some decades, adult education has been recognized, at least by educators, as an inseparable aspect of citizenship in any democratic community. The difference today is one of degree—an added urgency. Not only is adult education more than ever a national necessity but, as a result of the impact of scientific change upon relationships between States, it has now also become a matter of international concern.

It was no accident that the theme of the 1949 Conference at Elsinore was 'Adult Education', whilst that of the 1960 conference at Montreal was 'Adult Education in a Changing World'. The report of the Elsinore conference gives little indication that delegates were conscious of the implication of the curve of technological and scientific change, even though the explosion of the first atomic bomb at Hiroshima four years earlier had, in a grim and dramatic fashion, demonstrated that a new age was opening.

Delegates thinking of world discontent, frustration and disillusionment were conscious of change primarily in a retrograde sense of dissolution and breakdown. They were still too close to the world depression of the 1930's and the savagery and destruction of two world wars to believe that change in the sense of development and technological progress was likely to be a major cause of future problems. It is perhaps understandable that delegates attending a conference in 1949 should be more conscious of the problems of recovery than of those which might be created by advances in scientific knowledge and skills. They could not ignore the population explosion created by the application of modern medical

1. R. M. Hutchins, *The Education we Need*, Chicago, Henry Regnery, 1947.

methods in the so-called underdeveloped areas of the world, but they could be excused for failing to foresee the nationalistic and anti-colonial explosion which within a few years was to revolutionize the political structure of Asia and Africa, and, as a by-product, the membership of international organizations. Eleven years later, however, these were no longer potential problems—they were sharp illustrations of a world in rapid change.

#### FROM ELSINORE TO MONTREAL

Eleven years may not seem a long interval between world conferences on adult education when one considers the planning and organization involved, the costs to be borne and the difficulties of time and travel. To understand how vast that interval was, in terms of world change and adult education, we must have another look at the Elsinore conference, its composition and membership, its general conception of the nature and role of adult education and its most urgent tasks, and finally at the world as it appeared in 1949, when this first Unesco conference on adult education was convened. All, in their own way, are illuminating if we want to know what happened in the interval between the two conferences and seek to understand the atmosphere of the 1960 Montreal conference, the discussions which took place there, the decisions reached and the recommendations made.

The Elsinore conference undoubtedly marked a big step forward in international co-operation and consultation in the special field of adult education, but its limitations must be recognized. Of the 79 delegates and observers who met there, 54 came from 14 European countries and 14 from North America. Eleven delegates represented the rest of the world. Egypt, with one delegate, was the only country represented from the continent of Africa. There was only one delegate from the whole of Latin America. Three delegates, one from China, one from Pakistan and one from Thailand, represented Asia. There were no representatives at all from the countries of Eastern Europe or from the Republics of the USSR. Thus, Elsinore remained essentially a West European regional conference on adult education. There was a reasonably strong contingent from Canada and the United States of America, but little more than a token representation from the other countries of the world. The numerical strength of the West European delegations, their greater degree of shared traditions and possibly the somewhat wider professional experience in adult education of the British, North American and Scandina-



vian delegates, made it inevitable that discussions and decisions would be strongly coloured by the attitudes and experience of these countries. The final result was not without weaknesses in terms of the international purposes of the conference. When translated into terms of international action affecting countries facing problems of a different order of magnitude from those faced by Great Britain, Scandinavia or North America over the preceding 40 or 50 years, the conclusions of the Elsinore conference were not necessarily a helpful guide.

The position at Montreal was quite different. In terms of geographical distribution every important region of the world was represented. Of the 51 countries represented at the Montreal conference, 8 were African, 10 were Asian and 8 were Latin American. There were delegates from the USSR (Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine) and from Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Hungary. Of a total of 112 only 33 delegates, observers and advisers came from Western Europe.

The increase in overall membership and in the number of countries, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations represented at Montreal throws an interesting light on changes which had occurred in the status of adult education during the years between the two conferences. But an analysis of their relative membership does not, in itself, necessarily reveal the full measure of those changes.

The increase in the number of countries represented, from 25 in 1949 to 51 in 1960, is partially a measure of the extent to which the importance of adult education was gaining recognition among national governments. On the other hand the number of delegates attending, or the number of international non-governmental organizations represented, is more a reflection of Unesco policy than an adequate measure of the interest aroused. It seems certain that the number of participants from Member States or international non-governmental organizations would have been greater than the final figure of 174 had Unesco not taken steps to limit the size of the conference.

At the 1960 conference, partly because of restrictions placed on the size of delegations at the main conference and partly to take full advantage of the presence in Canada of leading adult educators from all parts of the world, a series of subsidiary international conferences concerned with special fields of adult education was organized. These were held just before or immediately after the main Unesco conference and included the Pugwash conference on 'Continuing Education', a meeting of the Adult Education Committee of the World Confederation of Organizations of the

Teaching Profession, and world conferences on 'Residential Education', 'Workers' Education', 'University Adult Education', and 'Audiovisual Aids in Adult Education'.

All these conferences represented an interlocking programme of international consultation unparalleled in the history of adult education. They provided an opportunity for a deeper and more thorough examination of specialist topics and problems of concern to adult educators. They permitted the fullest advantage to be taken of the varying experience and skills of adult educators who had come to Montreal from all over the world, and they provided an opportunity for adult educators not attending the Unesco conference to meet colleagues from other nations and to exchange ideas and experiences. It is doubtful whether attempts to arrange such a programme of linked world conferences would have proved successful at the time of the Elsinore conference in 1949; that it was possible in 1960 throws some light on the extent of the changes which had since taken place in the structure and status of adult education.

Much of the credit for the success of this ambitious programme of satellite conferences must go to the Canadian and American adult educators responsible for their initiation, planning and organizing and to the individuals, organizations and foundations which sponsored and financed them. Energy, organizing ability and generosity, however, are not the sole explanation of their success. The climate must favour such a varied range of international discussions within such a relatively short time. One factor which contributed to creating the necessary climate is the fact that, throughout the world, a substantial body of people are now professionally engaged in adult education. The Montreal conference and the related fringe conferences all indicated, by the character both of their membership and their deliberations, the rise of the professional in adult education. The passing of the 'gifted amateur' may mean the loss of certain qualities which characterized the adult education movement in the early days, but the rise of the professional makes possible a more serious and sustained attack on the problems facing adult education. No doubt this process of professionalization had started some decades ago in certain countries, and the influence of the professional certainly made itself felt at Elsinore. But the process had become more marked over recent years and it emerged at Montreal as a symbol of deep-rooted change in the structure of adult education.



## CHAPTER I

# THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF ADULT EDUCATION

While informal learning forms part of the educational pattern by which adults gain knowledge and understanding, it is not necessarily included within the scope of the term 'adult education' as it is used today. The term is used in a much more restricted and technical sense to cover 'organized' activities and programmes concerned with the education of adults. In this sense it embraces the whole complex of educational institutions, professional or semi-professional bodies, voluntary organizations concerned with providing educational opportunities for adults, and the bewildering range of programmes they arrange. Even if we limit our attention to adult education in this more restricted sense we could, no doubt, find examples of it stretching back through history to the Greek city states or earlier. For our purpose, however, organized adult education as we know it has its historical roots in experimental work undertaken during the nineteenth century. It is a by-product of the scientific age, the industrial revolution and of a rising democracy. 'The most active periods in the history of adult education have always been those in which there has been the greatest rapidity of change.'<sup>1</sup> It is in these periods of rapid change that the knowledge acquired either informally or through customary educational processes proves most inadequate. Such a period existed in the United Kingdom and in Denmark in the first half of the nineteenth century, and may be used for illustrative purposes.

In England it was brought about by changes caused by the industrial revolution, the impact of new industrial and scientific techniques, the hasty development of new factory towns, the rise of a new urban proletariat. In Denmark it was based upon changes within an agricultural society, the increasing freedom of the peasants under the influence of the French Revolution, the rise of

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1. Robert Peers, *Adult Education*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958, p. 3.



agricultural democracy and the growing sense of nationalism under the threat of German cultural expansion. In such periods of change the adult education movement is quickened and strengthened, firstly by a greater awareness on the part of certain sections of the existing educational elite that the less privileged must be helped to overcome educational deficiencies, and secondly, by a consciousness on the part of the educationally under-privileged that lack of education is a handicap no longer tolerable. Even a Grundtvig or a Mansbridge could not have founded important adult education movements if social conditions had not first created in the minds of workers and peasants a desire for education, a desire which made them responsive to the message these leaders brought. In both countries there was a ferment in men's minds and a hunger for the knowledge which would help them to understand the changes which were taking place.

#### FROM PHILANTHROPY TO EDUCATION FOR POWER

In the early stages of adult education a good deal of its driving force was based upon a religious and philanthropic spirit, and sprang from the belief that, if the poor were to lead moral, useful and happy lives, they must be able to read the Bible.<sup>1</sup> This conviction led to the setting up of adult schools. Their founders, influenced by philanthropic and religious motives, believed also that 'education, so long as it did not go too far, would lead to a diminution of crime and thus to the greater security of property, and also to a decline in pauperism and a reduction in the poor rate'.<sup>2</sup>

But the motives of those who sought adult education during the nineteenth century did not always coincide with the motives of those who undertook to provide it. The workers in the new industrial towns were growing more and more dissatisfied with the drabness, poverty and degradation of their lives and with the intolerable working conditions in mines and factories. Lack of education seemed a symbol of political inferiority, and the insistence on the need for education as a means to social and political emancipation became characteristic of all the struggling working class organizations of the first half of the century.

The founders of adult education institutions in these early years came from the educated sections of society. Although many

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1. Robert Peers, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

2. *ibid.*, p. 9.

of them sincerely believed that they were acting in the best interests of those they served, they also believed that in doing so they were safeguarding order, stability and maintenance of the *status quo*. But the workers were concerned with knowledge because knowledge was power. Adult education to them appeared as a 'dynamic of social change'.

#### FROM 'REMEDIAL EDUCATION' TO 'ADULT EDUCATION'

In great Britain, by 1919,<sup>1</sup> education was held to be a lifelong process and adult education not merely a matter of making up an educational training missed in youth. Yet the road to this conception of education had been a long one. Most of the work in adult education had been essentially 'remedial' and much of it remains so. Adult education in nineteenth—and early twentieth—century England was mainly a matter of providing educational opportunities for adults who for various reasons had failed to obtain formal schooling.

Much of the teaching at the early Danish folk high schools was of a type which would be provided in normal State rural high schools for adolescents a few generations later. Many of the adult education programmes in the United States have been concerned with the assimilation of non-English-speaking immigrants, or with providing a secondary education for adults who have received no more than an elementary education.

Today almost half the adult population of the world is still illiterate. Even in the educationally privileged countries where illiteracy is practically unknown, a high proportion of adults have received no more than an elementary education. There are still groups of eager and able adults, even in countries where the educational system is most egalitarian, who would benefit by higher education at university level. Further attention will be paid to the responsibilities of adult education in the field of remedial education when we consider in detail the discussions at both the Elsinore and the Montreal conferences.

But out of the remedial education work of the early adult educators there emerged certain conclusions. The work of the early adult schools demonstrated that adults could learn new things, that you could 'teach an old dog new tricks'. This was a startling discovery in an age in which child labour in the mills

1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee. [Report.] *A Design for Democracy: an abridgement of a report. . . commonly called the 1919 Report*, London, Max Parrish, 1956, p. 53-5.



was justified on the ground that children could not learn skills after the age of 7. Experience with adults had revealed that they frequently made more rapid progress in their studies than children.

An even more important discovery resulted from the experience gained in the latter part of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth centuries. This was the growing realization that there were many subjects which could only be studied with value by adults. A child can hardly be expected to appreciate much that is significant in great art, drama or literature. These are created by adults for adults. No child can really appreciate *Othello*, for example, for he is too immature to have any real understanding of the emotions which determine the acts of an *Othello* or a *Iago*. Children can have little understanding of political, philosophical or social questions. Experience of life and responsibilities is required before such studies become meaningful.

Even those who have been fortunate enough to receive a sound education in the traditional sense need to continue their studies not merely because there are subjects which have meaning for them only later in life but also because of the need for continual growth and development. Education is required to broaden their interests and to keep their intellectual faculties alert and flexible.

#### DIFFICULTIES OF DEFINITION

A recognition of the varying ways in which the term 'adult education' has been interpreted, if not defined, is important to an understanding of the attitude of delegates at Elsinore and to an appreciation of the change in adult education thinking between Elsinore and Montreal. During the late nineteenth and more particularly during the first decades of the twentieth century in the United Kingdom, the use of the term 'adult education' became in practice attached to the higher liberal education of adults—to the type of adult education, in fact, which had been the particular contribution of workers' education in Great Britain and of the folk high schools in Scandinavia.

This restriction had the justification that it limited the use of the term to that part of education which was specifically 'adult' in that it dealt with subject areas which could have little meaning to children or adolescents.

Even before the distinction between 'remedial education' and 'adult education' was made, some limitations were placed upon what should be included within the framework of the adult education provided. It excluded, for example, vocational education

for adults. In Great Britain, Mansbridge had been quite emphatic that adult education was concerned with life but not with livelihood.

Grundtvig and his followers in Denmark were just as emphatic that the adult education they were planning to provide did not include vocational or professional training. The principal of the first folk high school established in Denmark, in 1844, made the point very clear in his inaugural address. 'No one is to be trained here', he said, 'for a future profession or to be given knowledge which will enable him to secure a livelihood. It is assumed that the young desire to be, and will remain, peasants and citizens, and all we want to do is to teach them what is necessary if they are to behave as independent and mature members of the community.'<sup>1</sup>

As the definition hardened, however, it became still more restrictive. It not only excluded the vocational education of adults but confined itself to adults who were literate. It was no longer concerned with 'remedial' education in terms of adult literacy nor with 'remedial' education for adults who had missed a secondary education. It could no longer include within its framework a wide range of 'deliberate efforts by which men and women attempt to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, to equip themselves for their responsibilities as citizens and members of society or to find opportunities for self-expression.'<sup>2</sup> The definition had hardened in a way which was to create confusion and bedevil international discussions on adult education both before and after Elsinore, but it was far from narrow.

The boldness of conception and vision gave the definition a grandeur which goes far to explain the grip it gained on men's minds. The views and practices of the early principals of the Danish folk high schools have a stirring quality about them which makes them appear refreshingly alive even today. Høgsbro, one of the early principals at the Rødding folk high school, wrote in 1853: 'The folk high school shall not foster blind fanatics, but enlightened, conscientious citizens. It shall give the pupils as true a picture of actual conditions as possible; it shall draw their attention to different conceptions, emphasizing the main arguments for and against them; it shall endeavour to rouse consciousness of common problems, and stimulate interest in their solution by developing the powers of its pupils—powers of the heart as well as those of the head—and thereby enable them to tackle them; but solutions

1. J. Novrup, *Adult Education in Denmark*, Copenhagen, Det Danske Forlag, 1952, p. 20-1.

2. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, *Adult Education Committee*, op. cit., p. 59.



themselves must not be given. Only then will their minds really be their own; only in this way will they, as independent and active men, be able to enter upon the life of a citizen. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

In Denmark, the approach was to arouse interest, to 'enliven' the mind so that 'enlightenment' could be achieved. In Great Britain the approach was not dissimilar but aimed rather at an élite of the working class—the few able and intelligent workers who were prepared to submit themselves to a rigorous and prolonged academic discipline. In both countries, however, the actual subject matter studied was less important than the mental and intellectual training involved. The educational process was based upon teaching people not what to think but how to think. It is easy to see in retrospect the way in which the contribution of the Scandinavian folk high schools and of workers' education in Great Britain tended to dominate adult education thinking over the first 50 years of the twentieth century. Practice tended to define 'adult education' and the definition which emerged from this practice caused confusion even in countries where the tradition was most firmly established. The attempt to carry it over into international discussions created difficulties in communication which must be examined a little more closely when we consider the deliberations at Elsinore and Montreal.

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1. J. Novrup, *op. cit.*, p. 24.



## CHAPTER II

# ELSINORE—THE BACKGROUND AND THE TASKS

Developments in industry and trade, in scientific knowledge and technological application, had created by the first decades of the twentieth century a world of closely interrelated contacts and tensions. Improvements in transport and communication made the world smaller. Industrialization was already establishing a world economy and sharpening worldwide competition for control of markets, sources of raw materials, and profitable avenues of capital investment. Industrialization was also changing the nature of modern warfare; future wars would not be won without mobilization of all national resources—both human and material. All these factors created a situation in which wars, wherever they started, were almost certain to affect all mankind.

### INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The need for some form of organization to encourage discussion of the causes of international tension, and to provide machinery for the peaceful solution of international disputes was recognized even in the nineteenth century. It took the disaster of the first world war to bring into being the League of Nations. Disillusionment with the achievements of the League between 1919 and 1938 could not blind the world to the continuing need for some international organization. Even during the darkest days of the second world war much consideration was given to ideas for improving the machinery of international consultation and action. One of the first steps taken by the victors in the second world war was the creation of the United Nations Organization.

The League of Nations had been unable to solve the disagreements of Member States, or to prevent aggression in Manchuria in 1931, or in Abyssinia in 1935; it had been helpless in the face of the growing international tension which precipitated

the second world war. But the League's history is not by any means one of complete failure. It achieved much, particularly through such specialized agencies as the International Labour Office. The history of the United Nations during the first 15 years of its existence does not differ greatly from its predecessor in this respect. Much of the success achieved in international co-operation during this period has been the result of the work of its specialized agencies, agencies such as the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

One of the new specialized agencies created in 1945 was the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It was this specialized agency which in 1949, only four years after it was established, called the international conference on adult education at Elsinore.

#### THE BRAVE NEW WORLD

How did the world appear to the delegates gathered at this first Unesco World Conference on adult education? Which problems seemed the most pressing? What did they see as the tasks facing adult education?

Scientific and technological changes had certainly not ceased in 1949, but the lines of their development were blurred, their potentialities of rapid acceleration obscured. The picture was confused by almost 35 years of destruction, stagnation and painful reconstruction. The consequences of industrialization in the nineteenth century were frequently harsh and ugly, but there was a buoyant undercurrent of hope and confidence in the ultimate future, a feeling of progress and achievement. At the dawn of this century men assured themselves that progress was evolutionary and that its end result would be a 'Brave New World'. Fifty years later, after two world wars and the depression of the 1930's, men were more wary of the breakdown of civilization than confident of unending progress. The dream of a new kind of world had degenerated, at its best, into the narcotic *Brave New World* of Aldous Huxley, or, at its worst, into the nightmare of Orwell's *1984*.

It is true, of course, that both the dreams and the nightmares were essentially phenomena of Western civilization. Both the easy optimism of the nineteenth century and the pessimism so characteristic of the first half of the twentieth were moods of Western man rather than of all mankind, perhaps because it was in the West



that modern science and technology emerged, that the industrial revolution had its beginnings and that speed of change had been most rapid. In any case these ideas profoundly influenced the discussions and decisions at Elsinore, for the delegates to the first Unesco World Conference on Adult Education, as we have seen, came predominantly from the countries of the West—from Europe and North America.

The outbreak of the first world war in August 1914 marked the end of an age. The four years of war in which a generation died, in which the capital resources of so many advanced industrial countries were destroyed and in which the normal development of industry and trade was distorted, brought to an end the too easy assumption of unending progress. The Armistice of 1918 brought a wave of relief, but, if it aroused hopes that the world could return to the steady march of progress, such hopes were soon disappointed. Four years of savage fighting were followed by revolution and peripheral war, inflation and economic collapse, uneven recovery and painful reconstruction.

Even as the world groped its way toward economic normality in the latter part of the 1920's, it was gripped by the paralysing depression of the 1930's. Men and machines were idle throughout the industrial countries of the world while the less industrialized countries despairingly destroyed foodstuffs and raw materials they could no longer sell. International trade dwindled to a trickle. Capital investment faltered and stopped. Even in richly endowed countries like the United States of America, almost untouched by the war, progress was replaced by uncertainty and stagnation. Franklin Roosevelt could say on his inauguration as President of the United States of America in 1932 that, in the richest and most highly industrialized country in the world, one-third of the people were ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed.

When after 1935 machines began to move, rates of capital investment to quicken, international trade to return to normal and the hard core of unemployment slowly to dissolve, economic improvement brought little hope with it. Recovery seemed too clearly and too closely related to international tension and the requirements of a newer, bigger armament race: the second world war loomed on the horizon.

#### MAN AND DEMOCRACY

Not only had the first world war and its aftermath destroyed faith in the ability of industrialization and technical development to

ensure a steadily increasing prosperity; it had also undermined confidence in man's ability to control his own destiny through democratic procedures. In the 1930's democracy was on the retreat. In country after country the 'individual man' of the nineteenth century was turning into the 'mass-man' of the twentieth, and this mass-man was surrendering his rights, and his responsibility to make decisions, to leaders often contemptuous of democracy. The faith that universal education would provide men with an intellectual discretion to guide all their judgements was beginning to fail. Few people in the Western countries were illiterate. In most Western countries compulsory education had existed long enough to ensure that the majority of adults could at least read, write and count. Mass media of communication had been developed for the new literate masses. These new methods of communication, however, proved easy to control by those who had the power. Mass reading and mass listening developed into formidable tools of regimentation. It seemed easy, far too easy, to confuse the printed pages with proof. Trends in the world between 1928 and 1948 provided a discouraging, almost terrifying, picture of the speed with which the veneer of civilization could be stripped from a whole people, of how easily primitive passions could re-emerge.

The delegates to the Elsinore conference were all too conscious of the shifting sands on which civilization rested. This awareness is reflected in the reports of their discussions and in the papers presented. It is brought out most forcibly in the thoughtful and analytical address of Jean Guéhenno, the French educationist.<sup>1</sup> He quoted the words of the French writer Paul Valéry, written in 1920 just after the war waged by so many in the belief that it was 'to end wars'.

'Now, on a vast battlement of Elsinore, stretching from Basle to Cologne, and reaching out to the sands of Nieuport, the marshes of the Somme, the chalk-lands of Champagne and the granite hills of Alsace, the European Hamlet faces millions of ghosts.

'He is a Hamlet of the mind. He is meditating on the life and death of truths. His ghosts are the subjects of all our disagreements; his remorse is for all on which we pride ourselves; he is weighed down by the burden of knowledge and discovery, powerless to embark anew on those boundless endeavours. He reflects on the weariness of beginning the past over again and the folly of constantly seeking something new. He wavers between two pitfalls,

1. Jean Guéhenno, 'Adult Education and the Crisis of Civilization', in: *Adult Education: current trends and practices*, Paris, Unesco, 1949, p. 29-30.



for two dangers continually threaten the world: order and disorder.

'When he picks up a skull, it is a famous one. "Whose was it?" This was Leonardo. He invented the flying man but the flying man has not done quite what the inventor intended; we know that today the flying man astride his mighty swan (*il grande uccello sopra del dosso del suo magno cecero*) has other things to do than to fetch snow from the mountain tops to scatter it, on hot days, in the streets of the cities. . . . This other skull is that of Leibnitz, who dreamed of universal peace. . . .

'Hamlet is not sure what to do with all these skulls. Supposing he left them behind! . . . — Will he cease to be himself? His terribly penetrating mind considers the path from war to peace. That way is far darker and more dangerous than the way from peace to war; it troubles all the nations. "And I", he says, "I, the intellect of Europe, what will become of me . . . ?" And what is peace? Peace is perhaps that state in which the natural enmity of men takes shape in creation instead of being turned to destruction, as in war. It is the time of creative competition and the struggle to produce. But am I not weary of producing? Have I not exhausted the urge to rash experiment and had recourse too often to subtle compounds? Must I follow the rest of the world and copy Polonius, who is now the editor of a big newspaper? Or Laertes, who is something in the air force? . . .

'Farewell, ye ghosts! The world needs you no more. Nor me. The world which gives the name of progress to its fatal desire for certainties, is trying to combine the advantages of death with the good of life. There is still some confusion, but yet a little while and all will be explained; we shall at last see the miracle of an animal society, the perfect ant-heap for ever more.'

Jean Guéhenno went on to point out that if Valéry's grim meditations in 1920 bore witness to the profound despair, the dreadful doubts and the immense weariness which characterized Europe at that time, these feelings themselves had been powerful factors in leading the Western world further and further on the downward path. What, he asked, would the delegates to the Elsinore conference in 1949 add to Valéry's meditations if they were bold enough to continue them on the battlements at Elsinore 29 years later? 'I shall say nothing here', he said, 'lest I cast gloom over the discussions—of all we have been forced to learn of man and men in the last 10 years. I shall not speak of that world which another of our writers has called the "concentration world", and which stretches far beyond the boundaries of the concentration camps, for it perhaps involves us all; we bear a great blemish. We now know that Sade was right and that man is that, too, "that" of



which we dare not speak. Man has perhaps never undergone so deep a change as in becoming the mass-man into which he is turning. What has since become of the individual, who stood in such peril in 1920? What an advance here, too! We march together, we shout together. Is there anywhere we do not go in company? We go to the factory, to prison, to the concentration camp, to death—always together. We think together . . . or we believe we do. In fact, we can never think together. Thought is not an exercise which can be done in company. But we do everything else together. I remember the inscription which used to be put on graves: *Hic jacet*, followed by a surname and Christian name. It stood for the passionate desire, even in death and among so many million dead, to remain oneself, an individual. But now the sole desire of every man is to be saved or lost with the multitude, to think, so to speak, by proxy, and the common grave may soon become, by law, the fittest charnel-house for these depersonalized masses.'

#### TASKS FACING ADULT EDUCATION IN 1949

Many of the delegates to the Elsinore conference had been associated with adult education organizations representing the working class movement. They well realized the extent to which adult education had been the means whereby members and leaders of workers' organizations had gained the knowledge required to press for the building of a more humane society. Their view of the past contribution and present tasks of adult education was put very clearly by Sir John Maud—then Permanent Head of the British Ministry of Education: 'Fifty years ago, certainly in my country, the needs which adult education was seeking to meet, and has now to an amazing extent succeeded in meeting, could be summed up as follows: the need for power, the need for the educationally under-privileged (those were the people for whom the adult education movement specially catered), the need for political and economic power, for security, for work, for leisure. All these things were in fact unobtainable except on the condition that the under-privileged obtain power, and education was needed to give them that power. Now, if I may over-simplify, I think it is true to say that these needs, to a large extent in my country at any rate, have been met. We find that we have got, each one of us, all the responsibility we want and even more; that we have full employment—there are more jobs than there are people to do them; and that the quantity of leisure has immeasurably increased through holidays with pay and a reasonable number of hours in the work-

ing week. Seen from the point of view of 50 years ago, the achievements of today are astonishing. . . .

‘But now we find ourselves having apparently achieved power and not knowing how to use it. The need which adult education, I would suggest, must today above all things meet is this need to find significance in our work, to find significant and creative possibilities in our leisure time, and to know how our political responsibilities as citizens of our country, as citizens of the world, can be discharged. And so, whereas power was what 50 years ago the adult educator wanted to help the people to get, now it is the knowledge of how to *use* power—and the means of preventing the *abuse* of power by those who control the new methods of mass persuasion’.<sup>1</sup>

Sir John Maud’s listeners were conscious of this responsibility of adult education. They knew that, if people were to have any control over the changes revolutionizing their world, they had to be informed enough to exert their influence wisely within the framework of democratic political institutions. Democracy is not a simple or easy form of political organization to make work well. To be effective it must be based upon an electorate competent to understand, and judge upon, the complex problems facing society. Only education can produce such an electorate.

With so many recent examples of the rise of other forces before them, it was natural that the delegates should be particularly concerned with education for civic responsibility. Their conclusions in this field were summed up by the introduction to the report of Commission 1: ‘Each individual does not live alone, or for himself only; he belongs to family, economic, social and national groups towards which he has certain obligations. A democratic education has to ensure a harmonious balance between the individual’s rights to a personal, free and human life and his duties towards the community to which he belongs. Thus it is the task of adult education to provide individuals with the knowledge essential for the performance of their economic, social and political functions and especially to enable them, through participation in the life of their communities, to live a fuller and more harmonious life. Accordingly, the aim of adult education is not so much to provide instruction as to ensure a training: it seeks to create an atmosphere of intellectual curiosity, social freedom and tolerance and to stimulate in each person the demand and the capacity to take part in the development of the cultural life of his day.’<sup>2</sup>

1. John Maud, ‘The Significance of Adult Education’, in: *Adult Education: current trends and practices*, Paris, Unesco, 1949, p. 18-19.

2. International Conference on Adult Education, Elsinore, 1949, *Summary Report*, Paris, Unesco, 1949, p. 12.



MAN IN MASS-SOCIETY

A second characteristic of modern society, particularly the industrial societies of the West, is the spiritual or psychological loneliness of man in the urbanized industrial communities. This phenomenon was referred to by all the main speakers at the conference. Torres Bodet referred to the 'absolute loneliness of the ordinary man' and suggested that never before has this spiritual loneliness been so profound or so unrecognized. Sir John Maud drew attention to another modern characteristic linked with loneliness, the feeling of impotence; the sense of being powerless. 'All of us today, or very many of us, suffer in this way; but in my opinion, we, as adult educators, must try to alleviate this suffering, and I believe we can. The English poet A. E. Housman—a poet of pessimism and of great beauty—wrote in a personal and almost blasphemous mood some lines which I think are echoed by very many people today in very many countries and, in particular, in countries like my own which are at an advanced stage of industrialization:

I, a stranger, and afraid,  
In a world I never made.

Now I believe there is an alternative to Mr. Housman's view. It is an alternative which we adult educators would all no doubt express in our own way, but which is the common basis of our confidence that we are significant, that we can help our fellow-creatures to be significant and to feel significant, to cease to feel strangers or be afraid, to cease to feel that the world is something with the making and remaking of which we have nothing to do.<sup>1</sup>

Delegates also recognized that industrialization and its accompanying social changes were breaking down traditional cultures and creating a gulf between ordinary men and women and the intellectuals. Torres Bodet referred to the extent to which the average adult of our time, bent over the soil hours every day, or subject from morning to night to the mechanical rhythm of industrial mass production, seems so rarely to be able to appreciate the life around him or to grasp the truth about his fellows. He went on to mention a second dangerous result in a world in which material interests have become the mainspring of action: 'A conception not less destructive of human community has arisen, the conception of a culture whose goals are no longer grandeur and strength, simplicity of impulse and breadth of vision, but are, alas, the difficult, the precious, the exceptional, the arbitrary and

1. John Maud, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

the refined. This has created a gulf between the ordinary people and the intellectuals, whose affectation and over-nicety have become more and more foreign to the crowd.<sup>1</sup>

Jean Guéhenno, in his address to the conference, approached the same problem from a slightly different point of view. He, too, was concerned with the disintegration of culture in modern society and the growing gulf between the average adult and the intellectual or specialist. Speaking at Elsinore he said: 'Our profession, our life demands the belief that the great wisdom latent in men is waiting to be stirred and to become conscious and active. Even people in our profession must perhaps be simple enough to think that things are still going so badly in the world only because this latent wisdom is not taken into sufficient account. The leaders of world affairs often scorn that wisdom. In some cases, their culture has become only a great sophistry; they employ it solely to justify their domination. The man who can speak is very influential among those who cannot. Isocrates seems to have had more disciples than Socrates in the history of mankind. I remember beginning my adult life with a protest against this terrible trickery and a denunciation of the gulf there then was, and perhaps still is, between humanity and the humanities, between the great mass of mankind and an aristocratic and sophisticated culture that was losing the will and the power of deliverance. There is no problem more urgent than the reconciliation of erudite thought and popular instinct, basing the policy of both on the hope of enlightenment cherished by all men.'<sup>2</sup>

#### THE PROBLEM OF LEISURE

Industrialization, in spite of the problems it brought in its train, had at least provided in the advanced industrial countries a rising standard of living, a longer expectation of life and shorter hours of work. The shorter working hours and the provision of holidays with pay gave millions of workers leisure time for interests and activities unconnected with gaining a livelihood. The emergence of leisure represented a challenge to adult education, for it provided time for people to acquire knowledge and the opportunity to come to studies less exhausted in body and mind. At the same time the wise and balanced use of leisure made available by industrial progress soon became a matter of national concern. It is strange

1. Jaime Torres Bodet, 'Adult Education and the Future of our Civilization', in: *Adult Education: current trends and practices*, Paris, Unesco, 1949, p. 13.

2. Jean Guéhenno, op. cit., p. 34.



that one of the most valued contributions of the technological revolution, the gift of leisure, should so soon come to be regarded as a problem.

Education for leisure thus became one of the major concerns for those responsible for adult education policies. As early as 1941, eight years before the Elsinore conference, Sir Richard Livingstone had drawn attention to the new task. 'Aristotle may have gone too far when he said that the object of education was to help men to use their leisure rightly', he said. 'But we have treated the majority as if they were to have no leisure, or as if it did not matter how they used what leisure they had. Art, music, science, literature were for the few. The rest were disinherited from some of the purest and highest pleasures. They might be machines or animals; men in the full sense of the word they could not be. That is the type of democracy with which we have been, and are, content.

'It mattered, perhaps, less in the past. When the working man had no leisure, why educate him to use something that he would never have? The question barely arose. But today it is arising, and in the near future it is likely to be urgent. In 1900 most men had enough to do to earn a living. In 1950 or 1960 they will probably have the opportunity to be more than breadwinners. But if the leisure of the future is to be entirely devoted to the films and the dogs, civilization will not have gained much by it. Fifty years ago leisure was no concern of any but the well-to-do, who mostly wasted it. Today its use is becoming a problem.'

At Elsinore the subject of education for leisure was raised by Torres Bodet, who pointed out the ways in which leisure had been abused in the recent past and could easily be abused again in the future: 'I should like, however, to draw your attention to a fact which this conference should certainly not overlook, for it is at the root of dangers which we must take into consideration in all our work. I am referring to the perfidious way in which the fascist regimes, both German and Italian, exploited the most personal and therefore the most inviolable of the assets usually possessed by adults: the short time, after their day's work in the fields or the workshop is done, when they are free to think. By seizing upon this modest possession, those regimes managed to change rest into meetings, amusement into hypnotism, education into propaganda and propaganda into drill.

'There was in this totalitarian activity a sort of obscure return to the cynical phrase of the Roman emperors, *panem et circenses*:

1. Richard Livingstone, *The Future in Education*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1941 p. 4-5.



a principle of government the mere mention of which would warrant a protest. Those leisure hours of the worker's life that we would like to see filled with understanding and beauty, with truth and poetry, are so hard won that to use them for the purpose of inoculating him with the drug of mass adulation, to which all demagogues resort when they set out to anaesthetize their followers, must be considered a breach of trust. To rescue the adult from the third-rate pleasures in which his wages sometimes enable him to indulge is of course an excellent motive. But the more excellent the motive, the more heinous would be the deception if that motive were invoked with the object of regimenting the worker's spare time after having ordered his day's work. There can be no question of substituting for drinking and gambling the political dance before the tribal gods. We have seen with our own eyes what Hitler and Mussolini made of the *Dopolavoro*: frenzied masses caught up in noisy, ostentatious celebrations, in aggressive parades which were bound to end in the bloody nightmare of war. 'The aim of our congress is entirely different, for we are convinced that to educate is to liberate.'<sup>1</sup>

#### LIMITING OF ADULT EDUCATION TO AN ELITE

The failure of universal and compulsory elementary education to provide an educated democracy was obvious enough to delegates at Elsinore. Some governments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had provided widespread educational facilities for children between the ages of 6 and 14, but usually only under pressure and often with cautious reluctance. The aims of governments in their educational policy were seldom either high or imaginative enough to meet the changing needs of society, and their parsimony in the past 50 years is regrettable. Mankind, during this period, has undoubtedly paid a heavy price for such frugality. Man's conscience by the 1940's was stirred by the feeling that there was something wrong, something ridiculous, in fact, in turning children out of school just at the stage when they might have started to think.

The attitudes of nineteenth and early twentieth-century governments towards education are understandable, however regrettable they may appear in retrospect. In the past no society had been able to afford more than a handful of educated people, and past experience hardly suggested that a society would need more than a

1. Jaime Torres Bodet, op. cit., p. 9-10.

handful even if it could afford them. In the modern world the position is being reversed. Modern society cannot be fully effective if anyone is educated to less than the limit of his actual capacity to learn. The uneducated are fast becoming an economic liability. In addition, the history of the 1930's and 1940's had demonstrated only too vividly the dangers which lie in a partly educated democracy. Jean Guéhenno drew attention to the unhappy relationship between an educational system turning out uneducated literates and the rise of totalitarianism. 'We cannot contemplate unmoved', he said, 'those generations of young men who, every July, leave school at the age of 13 or 14 and henceforth are at the mercy of chance alone for the development of their capacity of thought. It is true that they can read. But at every street corner they are assailed by the loud-speaker, the wireless and the newspaper. These young peasants and workmen are a prey to every form of propaganda. All parties struggle for control of these simple and defenceless young people in whose hands the future rests. How can they make a choice? What a clamour all around them! Each of them is swayed by the prejudices of his family, his immediate environment, his country. . . . They read only to confirm their prejudices. The propaganda spirit even persuades them that they are traitors unless they stick to their own newspaper or if they venture to seek guidance elsewhere. Reading becomes the most formidable means of regimentation, and a certain vanity in the ability to read in some measure arrests thought. We have indeed a tremendous task before us if we are to preserve the sense of truth in all men.'<sup>1</sup>

The adult educators who took part in the discussions at Elsinore realized that much of the education required to ensure an effective democracy could not be provided within the framework of school curricula or have any real meaning to children or adolescents. But they were also aware (a) that existing approaches in the liberal education of adults were involving only a small minority, an élite as it were, of potential adult students; (b) that a much sounder and more extensive period of school education was required in youth if young adults were to be awakened to the need for continuing their education throughout life, and (c) that until such extended educational facilities were available adult education must continue to carry a major responsibility for remedial education even in countries possessing the most advanced provision for universal and compulsory education.

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1. Jean Guéhenno, *op. cit.*, p. 33.



MACHINERY FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

One final aspect of the discussions and decisions of the Elsinore conference remains to be examined: the delegates' views of the tasks facing adult education in the sphere of international understanding.

The attitude which emerged from the discussions at Elsinore reflected the essentially Western—if not West European—character of the conference. When delegates spoke about the challenge to adult educators created by the deterioration of the material, spiritual and moral fabric of civilized life, it was natural, and possibly inevitable, that they should be speaking of the more advanced industrial countries of the world, and particularly of the industrial nations of West Europe.

As a result close consideration was given to the problems of the adult education movement in European countries recently released from totalitarianism, such as Germany, while scant attention was given to the problems of adult education in non-European countries emerging from authoritarian rule such as Japan. Discussions revealed a deep concern with the role and contribution of voluntary organizations in adult education. Yet here again only in Europe and North America had voluntary organizations made a significant contribution, both in pin-pointing the needs of sectional groups and in finding ways to meet those needs. In many countries of the world the needs themselves were too great and complex, the recognition of the role of adult education too sudden, to permit of the emergence of voluntary organizations strong enough, experienced enough or with large enough resources to enable them to play a similar role. If such countries awaited the development of voluntary organizations to provide adult education services they might have to wait a long time.

European experience was naturally reflected in the recommendations made by the conference when future international co-operation and action were under consideration. It was agreed that if the aims of the Elsinore conference and of Unesco were to be achieved there must be an effective worldwide adult education movement. It was also agreed, however, that it was still too early to consider the establishment of a permanent international organization for adult education. What appeared necessary at that stage was more effective machinery for securing co-operation among the organizations and leaders of adult education throughout the world. It seemed clear that such machinery could most effectively function through Unesco and its facilities.

The conference, therefore, recommended that (a) Unesco be invited to set up at the earliest possible moment a consultative



committee on adult education. This was to act in an advisory capacity to the Unesco Adult Education Division and to help Unesco implement the recommendations of the conference; (b) the consultative committee should be composed of representatives of the most important agencies engaged in adult education, including voluntary bodies, and of some representatives drawn from international bodies recognized by Unesco; and that (c) the composition of the committee should be determined by Unesco with due regard to geographical distribution and the differing states of development in adult education.

There could be little criticism of these proposals as such. They represented, if implemented, an important step forward in creating continuing machinery for international co-operation and action in the field of adult education. Yet their effectiveness depended to a marked degree upon the definition given to the term 'adult education' and, in practice, upon the limitations implicit in the proposal that the consultative committee should advise not Unesco but the Adult Education Division of Unesco.

It is necessary first to examine the definition of adult education which dominated Unesco's conception of this field in the early stages, and which was accepted by an influential section of the delegates present at Elsinore. Secondly, we will look at the position of the Adult Education Division of Unesco within the general administrative structure of that organization. The two are rather closely interrelated. Attention was drawn earlier to the evolution of a tradition in the United Kingdom which restricted the term 'adult education' to the liberal education of adults—particularly higher liberal education. Mr. E. M. Hutchinson, General Secretary of the National Foundation for Adult Education, London (now called the National Institute of Adult Education), speaking at Elsinore, defined adult education in the traditional English sense. 'Adult education', he said, 'is taken to mean those forms of education which are undertaken voluntarily by mature people (in the United Kingdom meaning persons above the age of 18) and which have as their aim the development, without *direct* regard to their vocational value, of personal abilities and aptitudes, and the encouragement of social, moral and intellectual responsibility within the framework of local, national and world citizenship. As used both in the United Kingdom, and in the Scandinavian countries, the term presupposes a general standard of literacy resulting from compulsory childhood education.'<sup>1</sup>

1. E. M. Hutchinson, 'Relations between Adult Education Voluntary Agencies and the State in Great Britain and in Sweden', in: *Adult Education: current trends and practices*, Paris, Unesco, 1949, p. 54.

Such a definition was unduly restrictive and difficulties were bound to arise when it was applied at the international level. It excluded the vocational and professional education of adults and therefore perpetuated a division between vocational and liberal education which was both unreal and harmful. Worse still, it excluded from the field of adult education more than half the adults in the world, for, in 1949, much the largest proportion of the world's people were lacking 'a general standard of literacy resulting from compulsory childhood education'.

Many representatives at Elsinore from other countries in Europe and North America gave a wider definition to the term 'adult education' both in speech and in programme practice, yet the background of adult education in their own countries was sufficiently akin to that in Great Britain for the stress on 'the liberal education of adults' implicit in the English definition to be accepted without much resistance.

Even before the delegates met at Elsinore, British and Scandinavian experience and traditions in adult education had influenced the organizational structure of Unesco. The term 'adult education' was attached to a minor division within the Education Department of Unesco. Literacy and fundamental education were seen as 'closely related to, but distinguishable from, adult education'.

The fact that the title 'Adult Education Division' was given to one of the smaller administrative sub-sections within Unesco proved an unhappy development. It tended to give the impression that the work of this division was the only work in adult education undertaken by Unesco. Worse still, it conveyed the impression that the type of work undertaken by the division was, in the view of Unesco, 'adult education' and that the other educational work undertaken by Unesco with, or on behalf of, adults was not 'adult education'. It was little help that at periodic seminars or conferences Unesco leaders would point out that much of the work of other divisions or departments represented a contribution to 'adult education'. The use of the term 'adult education' to describe one small division was certain to create confusion (a) as to the importance Unesco attached to adult education, and (b) as to the type of activities which came within its scope.

Unesco's use of the term 'adult education' in this way is understandable. British and Scandinavian educators had a similar conception, and their influence on Unesco policy was by no means insignificant. The recommendations of the delegates at Elsinore strengthened the trend already present in Unesco thinking. As a result, Unesco's contribution to adult education at the international level, though certainly important, remained unco-ordinated and



dispersed. To the outside world Unesco's programme in adult education (or at least the programme given the official title of 'adult education') was restricted in scope and size. Since resources available to the Adult Education Division were severely limited, the division had to concentrate on limited objectives even within its already narrow definition of adult education.

The division, after 1949, concentrated a great deal of its resources and energies in the field of 'worker's education'. This suited the special responsibilities of the Division of Adult Education as it had been constituted. Some of the major workers' educational organizations in Great Britain and Europe were among the most active organizations accepting the limited definition of 'adult education'. It also seemed to fit in with Unesco's policy of trying to make the greatest impact on the greatest possible number of people. In all countries workers form the largest social group and, moreover, the social group which remains, relatively speaking, the most educationally underprivileged. The composition of the Elsinore conference and the structure of the Consultative Committee on Adult Education created on its recommendation encouraged this line of approach. It could be argued, however, that this concentration of effort conveyed the impression that Unesco equated 'adult education' with 'workers' education'. Misunderstanding on this point might not, in itself, have been important had it not been that the division's efforts coincided with a blurring of the boundaries between general 'adult education' in a wider sense and 'workers' education'. Much of the history of adult education in the period between the two conferences was a struggle for an integration of all facets of the education of adults within one all-embracing definition.



## CHAPTER III

# CHANGE IN THE INDUSTRIALLY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

To the delegate at Elsinore change appeared as much a characteristic feature of modern society as it did to his successor at Montreal. But in 1949 change appeared to be much more a matter of violent fluctuations than a process of continuing and continuous development, a sudden deterioration as frequently as a dramatic advance. Two world wars and the stagnation of a worldwide depression had obscured the achievements and possibilities of the scientific and technological revolution. In most of the more advanced industrialized countries energies and resources in 1949 were mobilized for reconstruction. Their efforts represented a desperate attempt to get back to the levels of production achieved before the world depression of the 1930's. In 1949 food rationing was still in operation in most of the so-called developed countries. In Western Europe restoration of industrial efficiency and economic stability remained dependent upon large-scale financial and technical assistance from the United States under the Marshall Aid Plan.

### TOWARDS AN EDUCATED SOCIETY

Fifty years ago few human brains received any training above the elementary education level. A high proportion of those who were fortunate enough to obtain a higher education became lawyers, clergymen or entered other professions concerned with traditional knowledge. Even in the relatively advanced industrial countries only a tiny minority of available brains were brought into contact with the rapidly accumulating body of human knowledge. Most people continued to travel through life as ignorant of science and technology as their ancestors had been 200, 300 or 500 years earlier. Even in relatively rich countries such as the United States, earning a living did not provide much opportunity

for an average child to get more than a token education. He had to go to work as soon as he left elementary school, and the methods used were still on the whole based upon muscle power in agriculture and handicraft skills in manufacture.

During the last 40 or 50 years this barrier has fallen. The increasing productivity resulting from modern techniques has risen to the point where most young men in industrial countries can be spared from production until they have had time to train their brains.

Notable increases were especially witnessed in the number of young people getting secondary and higher education. Thirty or so years ago in the United States there were no more than 3 college graduates for every 100 men and women at work. There are 18 out of every 100 today, and present trends will bring the figure to 35 or even more per 100 in 20 years' time.

The fact that productivity has risen to the point where advanced industrial societies can spare their young men from production until they have had time for a reasonable educational training has multiplied by many times the number of active brains in the advanced countries.

The result has been what scientists call a geometrical increase in technological knowledge. As more brains participate in creating machines and methods to lighten the labour of man, they free still more brains for the learning process. These in due course come into industry in greater numbers and at a higher level. In turn their accomplishments raise the productivity of the average man and make it easier for his sons to open their minds to knowledge.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL MAN

Another marked development over the last 50 years has been the rapid welding of large numbers of human beings into closely co-operating units. In part this has been the result of technological developments, the expanded use of existing means of communication, and, more important still, the development of new mass media of communication. The closely knit corporations that now cover the industrialized countries and frequently spread their branches and offices over a large part of the world, keep in close touch with their scattered units by means of telephones, tie-lines, teletype circuits, air mail, house organs and fleets of private aeroplanes. Corporations of this size and complexity were inconceivable 50 years ago.

There were large organizations in the late nineteenth and early



part of the twentieth centuries but they bore little resemblance to the great organizations of today. The greatest of them would not rate inclusion in any list of the 500 largest corporations of this modern age. They could still be handled by their owners. Today the resources are too great, the organizational problems too complex. Industry has moved from the stage of 'magnates' to the stage of 'managers'. The horror of mechanized man, the robot of the conveyor system, has vanished with the advent of shorter working hours, the impact of industrial psychology and the modern factory. Today we are more concerned with 'organizational man', with 'the lonely crowd', and with the 'ad-mass society' of the 'hidden persuaders'. We are disturbed at the human and social problems created by our technological successes. Yet it is the divorce between ownership and management and the emergence of new concepts of management that have made the mass consumption economy possible.

#### ACCELERATION IN RATE OF CHANGE

If the compound interest effect of capital investment has brought all the advanced industrial countries to the stage of economic maturity and most to the beginnings of a mass consumption economy; if improvements in education and constantly increasing investment in research are accelerating the use of existing scientific and technological skills, the discovery of new knowledge and methods has also given men control over forces which can now destroy all mankind. Man, who has lived in the knowledge of his own death, has to learn to live under the possibility of the death of all mankind.

The ability to split and to fuse the atom marked the beginning of a new age in man's technological development. When Rutherford first demonstrated in 1919 that the atom could be split under laboratory conditions, there were few scientists, including Rutherford himself, who believed that it would be possible to utilize the new knowledge for the practical production of power and energy. Even as late as 1938 many of the leading nuclear physicists were convinced that, although it was known theoretically that matter could be converted into energy, there was no prospect of it being achieved in practice. Yet four years later the first nuclear reactor came into operation in Chicago, and seven years later the first atomic bomb was exploded. In the same way scientists concerned with the production of the bomb doubted whether nuclear energy could be used for peaceful purposes



for many decades. Yet in 1955 Great Britain was planning to produce 1,500 to 2,000 MW of atomic power by 1965 and a year later raised the target to 5,000 MW. The rapid introduction of atomic power for peaceful purposes over the last decade illustrates the extent to which new scientific knowledge can be speedily translated from academic theory into practical industrial use, and it would be easy enough to give other such examples.

The compound interest effect of capital accumulation was leading the industrially advanced nations through mass production to mass consumption. Industrial productivity had provided the basis for the emergence of the welfare state. It had permitted the release of the young from work for longer and more thorough periods of educational training. It had provided the resources for an ever-increasing investment in research which led to new discoveries, which led to new technological advances, which led to higher productivity.

All of these factors coming more sharply into focus in the 1950's created an atmosphere of endless and ever-quickenings changes and brought back something of optimism towards change as an evolutionary process of continuous progress.

#### **'TECHNOLOGICAL UNEMPLOYMENT'**

It is true that this optimism was qualified. World tensions and the development of weapons of ultimate destruction were sufficient to chill any excessive hopes. Moreover, change might mean unending progress in the long run, but in the short run it could make existing skills and employments obsolescent. The introduction of automation might eventually increase industrial efficiency and open the way to greater leisure, but for the individual worker in the short run it could mean unemployment. The complete application of automation may be some distance away but its introduction is proceeding steadily in the advanced industrial countries in one area of production after another. We cannot assume, merely because the change-over to automated factories will be gradual, that labour will be re-absorbed without strain into new industries. It is the new industries that are likely to be partly or fully automated from the beginning. The worker no longer required by an industry converting to automation may find that his skills are not the skills needed in another. Moreover, all present indications point to the conclusion that the saving in labour through automation is so great that even a relatively slow

but steady rate of change-over to automation will bring a marked rise in unemployment.

One of the most modern automatic factories in the world is a motor car engine factory in Detroit. It produces a finished automobile engine every two and a half minutes, and only a few workers supervise the machines and change tools at intervals. At Harworth in England an automated factory produces two million light bulbs a day and the only human intervention is to ensure adequate supplies of raw material.<sup>1</sup>

In 1950 the Russians built a plant for making car pistons. The only manpower used in the process is the initial loading of the aluminium ingots. After that the processes of casting, trimming, heat treatment, hardness testing, all the machining processes (turning, grooving, drilling, polishing), degreasing, tinsplating and washing are automatic. The work of 9 men per shift turns out 3,500 pistons a day. It is claimed that the total staff has been cut by 75 per cent and the number of manual workers required to one-sixteenth of the original total, while production costs are down to one-half of non-automated costs.<sup>2</sup>

Norbert Wiener, the American mathematician who participated in the development of cybernetic devices, had little doubts about the potential benefits of automation but, like many others, held a gloomy view of its initial consequences. 'How and when the new machines will be introduced', he said, 'naturally depends on economic conditions. I think it will take roughly 10 to 20 years before they are finally accepted. . . . Whenever that may be, the initial period of the introduction of the new machines will lead to an era of confusion. . . .

'Let us remember that the robot—quite apart from our ideas about whether it does or does not possess feelings—is the exact equivalent of the slave. Any working operation which seeks to compete with slave labour must adapt itself to the economic conditions of slavery. It is very clear that the result will be a time of unemployment, compared with which the depression of the thirties will seem a joke. . . . Thus the new industrial revolution is a two-edged sword. It can be used for the good of mankind provided that mankind survives long enough to enter upon an era where this is possible. If we follow the clearly visible pattern of our traditional behaviour, and remain faithful to our traditional idolizing of progress and the fifth freedom—freedom to exploit—it is practically certain that we shall have a decade or more of depression and despair.'<sup>3</sup>

1. Heinz Gartman, *Science as History*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1960, p. 250.

2. L. Landon Goodman, *Man and Automation*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books Ltd., 1957, p. 111.

3. Heinz Gartman, *op. cit.*, p. 253-4.



Possibly not many experts would be prepared to take quite so gloomy a view of immediate prospects, but most would agree that, whatever the long-run benefits of automation, the social and economic problems it will pose in the short run are likely to be acute. Society will be faced by the need for understanding the changes it will bring and must be prepared for the responsibilities they will invoke. A public opinion poll was held in Detroit in which people were asked to write down their fears in order of magnitude. The subject that headed the list was fear of war, but to the surprise of the organizers, the second was fear of automation.<sup>1</sup> Industry and the community must be prepared to face up to the task of providing economic security and adequate retraining facilities for those thrown out of work by automation. In referring to the Russian experiment in automating a car piston factory, it was pointed out that the new processes required 75 per cent less labour. The significant point, however, was that requirements for manual labour fell by over 90 per cent. Automation does away with the demand for unskilled or semi-skilled labour and replaces it by a demand for skilled technologists. The need for educational training programmes for adults who must acquire higher technical skills becomes urgent.

#### SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INSECURITY

The wealthier industrial countries have other problems of psychological tension and uncertainty. Technical change is gathering the people into vast urban centres. More than 90 per cent of population growth in the United States today is occurring in metropolitan areas and a similar trend is revealed in all industrialized countries. The towns are spreading out until the countryside itself is becoming urbanized. Problems of town planning, of traffic control, of population movements from mid-city to suburbia, confuse and perplex the responsible adult. The social welfare world of the advanced industrial countries has brought security but not necessarily happiness. Professor R. D. Waller has summed up this uncertainty: 'What nobody could foresee was that social security would be achieved in a dangerous and quite insecure world; that the achievement of so much of the apparatus of the good society should result in so wide and deep a slackening of impulse and endeavour; that the reduction of hours of work should result in "the problem of leisure" ; that the fulfilment of so

1. L. Landon Goodman, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

many purposes should end in a general uncertainty of purposes that we should get so far only to be so deeply puzzled.<sup>1</sup>

When the welfare state and full employment are based upon a mass consumption economy, the need to understand the nature of the changes taking place becomes more pressing. Professor Hallenbeck takes up this question. 'Today', he writes, 'most people find themselves in a world where everything changes. They seldom settle down. They take new jobs in different communities where they often must adjust to a different climate, other patterns of living, new sets of mores and values, where they must make new friends and establish new connexions. People also must constantly adapt to the material innovations which bring about alterations in their habits of living, in their responsibilities, and in their relationships. New problems of living together in communities, nation and world also have their impact upon individuals. The personal equipment required to live in such a world is vastly different from that which made for effective living where things stayed put.

'This new world of rapid change is not a disorderly world. The basis of its order, however, is not that things stay as they have been, but that disarrangements have continuity and are related to consequences which can be depended upon. Nor is this an insecure world. Its security, however, is based not on one's confidence that things will not change, but rather on one's confidence that one can understand the changes which will take place and has the knowledge and capacity to meet and take advantage of the changes with the resources at hand. One does not come by this kind of capacity "naturally", nor has it been a product of the tradition-bound curriculum in schools.

'It is quite as possible to learn to live in a changing world as it is to learn to live in a static world. . . .

'The job of adult education is to help people to understand the basis of order and security in a world of rapid change and to build their goals realistically in fitting terms; and to help people to understand their problems, discover the resources which are available to them and to find the way to solve their problems and to reach their goals under current circumstances. . . .'<sup>2</sup>

The citizen of the advanced industrial countries, however confident he may be in rising standards of living and ever-rising productivity, has problems enough to chasten his optimism. Apart from

1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, *Adult Education Committee*, op. cit., p. 31.

2. W. C. Hallenbeck, 'The Function and Place of Adult Education in American Society', in: *Handbook of Adult Education in the United States*, Chicago, Adult Education Association of the USA, 1960, p. 30-1.



his own insecurities, those of the rest of the world cannot but trouble him. Rising standards of living and increasing productivity are limited to a small group of nations. For the greater part of the world's population, poverty, ignorance and stagnation are still the characteristic features of the environment. Not only are the rich getting richer, but the poor, in the international sense, are getting poorer. As Mr. H. W. Singer<sup>1</sup> pointed out, the world real income *per capita*, and with it the standards of living of the average human being, is probably lower now than 25 years ago and perhaps lower than in 1900, because the nations raising their economic standard are a shrinking portion of world population. This disparity between the affluent societies and the economically underdeveloped ones is troubling the conscience and the consciousness of the world. If the rise of anti-colonialism, within colonial powers as well as within the colonies, is making a half-free world impossible, man is also beginning to question whether the world can remain indefinitely half rich and half poor.

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1. H. W. Singer, 'Economic Progress in Underdeveloped Countries', in: *Social Research*, March 1949, New York, New School for Social Research, p. 2.

## CHAPTER IV

# CHANGE IN THE UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Delegates to the 1949 conference were acutely conscious of many problems facing the industrial West but only dimly aware of problems elsewhere. Neither in the prepared speeches nor in the reports of the commissions was there any close examination of the changes taking place in the non-Western parts of the world or of the implications such changes might have in terms of adult education needs and programmes. This is of course understandable. The general composition of the conference, as we have seen, was predominantly West European; moreover, the situation in the less-developed areas of the world was by no means so clear as it is now. The impact of Western industrialization, science and technology upon countries in Asia and Africa had certainly created changes and set in motion forces which were building up year by year. In 1949, however, the situation was still too fluid for the shape of things to come to be seen plainly.

India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma had achieved independence, but this independence was followed by transitional disorder and difficulty. In Indo-China, Indonesia and Malaya there was either outright revolt or post-war unrest reflected in terrorism and guerilla warfare in the jungles. In Africa, nationalism was simmering but had not resulted in any major outburst.

It was difficult at that stage to assess the stimulation that events between 1941 and 1944 had given to nationalism in Asia. Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia and Viet-Nam gained their independence between 1949 and 1954. Malaya was granted independence in 1957. China by 1949 had freed herself from all outside control or influence, at least on the mainland, and once more had a government capable of exercising effective control over the whole of the vast territory including Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia and Manchuria. The success of nationalism in Asia was bound to have repercussions upon nationalist feelings in other areas of the world. The last



year or so of the decade was to see one African State after another gaining independence.

This nationalist explosion was in part a reflection of the ideas of nationalism or democracy imported from the West. It represented the desire of people everywhere to control their own destinies. The de-Europeanization of Asia and great tracts of Africa meant in another sense the final conquest of the world by Europe. Nationalism, democracy, Communism—all Western concepts—and above all the achievements of Western technology had fired the imagination of people in the underdeveloped countries. They were more vividly aware of industrial progress in the West, more sensitive to the widening gulf between their own falling standards of living and constantly rising ones in the industrialized countries. Their desire for national freedom was to a large extent based upon a dramatic increase in consciousness, a 'revolution in expectations'. They saw their national independence as the first step towards the reorganization of their economy and society on a more scientific and industrial basis.

To many of their leaders and to many sympathetic outsiders the position of their countries resembled the position of the Western world before the industrial revolution. With access to scientific knowledge and industrial technology their countries could take off on the path toward 'economic maturity' and eventually a 'mass consumption' economy. Unfortunately the analogy proved misleading. The gap between the developed and the developing countries of the world showed during the 'fifties every sign of widening rather than closing.

At the beginning of the industrial revolution around 1750 the European countries already possessed many of the material requirements, the theoretical concepts and, more important, the habits of mind which made rapid economic and technological advance possible. A general interest in new ideas and in scientific experimentation characterized the age. Expanded and profitable commerce had provided a basis for capital accumulations. The development of an integrated exchange economy over a large part of the Western world provided a reasonably firm basis for expansion. Few, if any, of these factors exist in the present world of developing countries.

#### CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Industrial development involves capital investment on a large scale. It is estimated that, to ensure economic growth, the rate of

effective investment must rise to 10 per cent or more of the national income. Even the advanced industrial countries achieved this level of investment in the initial stages of 'economic growth' only at the expense of stationary or even falling standards of living for the majority of the people. It is only over the last 25 years, and particularly over the last 10 or 15, that this investment has been reflected in a rapid rise in standards of living for the mass of the workers. The income of the average worker or peasant in the underdeveloped countries, however, is far below the level of the income enjoyed by the average worker and peasant in Europe on the eve of the industrial revolution. There is less margin, therefore, for the harsh methods which provided the basis for capital accumulation and economic growth in the West.

Moreover, the urge to industrialize in the economically underdeveloped areas of the world is based upon a 'revolution in expectations'. The masses in these areas, more conscious of the disparities in wealth which exist in the world, are determined to obtain a higher standard of living for themselves. Higher living standards in the West came only with the maturity of the industrial structure; but industrialization in the underdeveloped countries, sought precisely as a means to achieve such standards, can only progress at their expense.

Western countries entering upon industrial development had access to an international capital market. When the underdeveloped and developing countries were under the control of a foreign authority, they had some access to its capital resources. Although such investment profited the metropolitan power more than the indigenous inhabitants, it did provide harbour installations, railways, bridges and roads. With the coming of independence access to capital resources became more difficult. Once freedom is gained there is a natural desire to control the exploitation of natural resources; this may lead to nationalization or to the imposition of restrictions on foreign investors. Fears of such action, however unjustified, make it more difficult for the underdeveloped countries to get the capital required for industrial development. Investors in the developed countries are preferring to seek investment opportunities in the already advanced industrial countries. Even capital accumulation in the non-industrialized countries more frequently finds its way to the industrially advanced areas than to investment possibilities at home.

Barbara Ward, addressing the second annual conference of the Society for International Development in March 1960, questioned whether the emergent African States would even be as close to economic take-off in another 10 years as they are today.



'Africa as a whole is in the very early stages of development. It is in the move-in to take-off, if you like—and the drama of the next 10 years is how much nearer it is going to get to take-off, or to the diversification of economies, to the multiplication of skills, and to openings for economic development. One element of the drama is that, unlike some areas in the world, the Africans might conceivably be further away from take-off in 1970 than they are in 1960. This is not because the furies of over-population are driving at their heels; that dilemma, as I tried to point out, Africa has so far been spared. No, the problem is that so many of the supports for development, so many of the ways in which development is going forward now, become much less clear if we look forward 10 years.

'First of all, capital. A great deal of the capital now available for African development is coming from the metropolitan or ex-metropolitan powers in Europe. Of these, the French in particular have made a massive effort to transfer capital to West and Equatorial Africa. It has probably not been less than about \$250 million a year, which is a lot for investment in infrastructure—in education, health, and all the other necessities of development. The Colonial Welfare and Development Fund of the British has probably been putting in something like \$70 million a year. The figure is a little harder to establish for the Belgian Congo because at least 50 per cent of the development plan funds came from the reinvestment of funds earned in the Congo itself, but nevertheless it may be that something like \$50 million a year has been transferred from Belgium to the Congo over the last 10 years.

'What is quite unclear is how much of this large public investment is going to continue when all the colonial links are broken. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

One source of capital accumulation open to the underdeveloped or developing countries is export surplus. Strong governmental control over primary exports combined with rigid import restrictions might enable the building up of foreign exchange reserves to use for capital investment purposes. But trade between the advanced industrial powers and the emerging countries is falling relatively if not absolutely. Increasing agricultural and mineral production within the industrial countries, linked with the development of substitutes and synthetics, has made them less dependent upon the raw materials of the primary producing areas. The prices of most of the primary products of Africa have fallen by 10 to 12

1. Barbara Ward, 'Africa in 1970', in: *International Development Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, May 1960, Washington D.C., The Society for International Development, p. 4.

per cent over recent years; copper has fallen by 25 per cent in the last two years. Trade between the industrially advanced countries is developing much more rapidly than trade between the industrial and the non-industrial countries. The trade between the United States and India with its 450 million people is no greater than the trade between the United States and Switzerland with its 5 million people.

As the demand for the primary products of the emergent nations in the tropics rises with the rapid increase of industrial growth in the industrial nations, trade may rise absolutely if not relatively. But the underdeveloped countries are still handicapped by the uncertainty of world prices for their primary products; these prices fluctuate much more widely than the prices of the capital goods they require so desperately and which they must import.

#### POPULATION

The implications of the population explosion in terms of world food supplies has been recognized for some time. Unesco produced a number of studies on the subject in 1949 and 1950 specially for use in adult education study groups and classes. The problem is most acute in the economically underdeveloped or developing countries. Jacob Viner says: 'Population increase hovers like a menacing dark cloud over all poor countries. It can offset, and more than offset, the contribution to economic prosperity which all other factors can make.' The approximate rate of annual population increase is 2.3 per cent in Latin America, 2 per cent for the Near East, 1.4 per cent for Africa and 1.3 per cent for the Far East. India's population has increased by 44 per cent between 1921 and 1951 as against little more than 5 per cent in the preceding 30 years. Today it is rising at the rate of 5 million a year.

In non-industrialized countries an increase in population means that more people must find employment in agriculture. This leads to over-exploitation of soil fertility and increasing poverty. In almost all underdeveloped countries from one-third to one-half of the labour in agriculture is redundant. The same agricultural production could be obtained with a much smaller agricultural population, without any major technical or scientific changes. Better organization and a few more tools of quality would suffice. In the cities there is unemployment and, more important still,

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1. Jacob Viner, *International Trade and Economic Development*, Glencoe, Illinois, The Free Press, 1952, p. 147-8.



'under-employment'. If new production techniques were introduced and substantial capital investments made, the 'surplus' work force (ignoring for the moment a rapidly increasing population) would present an even greater problem. A rapid rise in population merely makes the matter that much worse. To preserve even existing levels of income in the face of a rapidly rising population implies a rate of economic growth which few underdeveloped countries can afford. The cost of feeding and raising a much larger new generation, plus the need for additional producers' equipment when they reach maturity, can leave little or no net savings for economic development.

The rapid increase in population in the underdeveloped countries reflects the impact of modern medical knowledge. Births have not increased, but deaths have been reduced. Public health measures which dramatically reduce deaths from infectious diseases can be introduced into underdeveloped countries relatively easily because the cost is extremely low. It has been estimated that public health services which lead to a rapid reduction in deaths can be developed for as little as 15 to 30 cents a person a year with practically no immediate impact on the cost side of the economy.<sup>1</sup> The implications of the introduction of modern public health measures in terms of population increase in a developing country is shown by a drop of 62 per cent in the death rate in Puerto Rico over recent years.

In considering whether the underdeveloped or developing countries can follow the same pattern of economic growth as the developed industrial powers it must be borne in mind that modern medical knowledge was not available when the Western powers started on their industrial development. Populations were just large enough to provide the surplus labour required for expanding industries but not large enough to create the problems facing underdeveloped countries today. Nor was there any population explosion through sudden and drastic falls in the death rate. The fall in the death rate in Western countries due to improvements in public health services came gradually and tended to coincide with a fall in the birth rate.

#### INDUSTRIALIZATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Are the newly developing countries to follow the same stages of development through which the Western industrial powers

1. E. Ross Jenney, *International Development Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, May 1960, Washington, D.C., The Society for International Development, p. 34.

passed or are they to build an industrial structure based on the most advanced technological models? A gradual development would provide employment but never catch up technically with the more advanced industrial countries. A modern industrial structure would create more unemployment than ever. Modern industrial plants require a great deal of capital but use little labour. Puerto Rico spent \$11 million on the first five industrial plants it built but the total number of workers employed was less than one thousand. The average job involved a capital investment of \$11,000. The capital investment per worker employed in the more advanced industrial plants, such as steel, oil processing or chemicals, lies between \$20,000 and \$25,000. Even for simple secondary industry enterprises the investment is likely to average \$5,000 to \$7,000 dollars per worker.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Blackett has pointed out that 'the high capital cost of industrialization is the main reason why "take-off" is such a difficult operation for the pre-industrial countries. This is especially so at present because most production goods must be imported, thus making heavy demands on foreign exchange, which, except in a few oil and mineral-producing countries, is chronically short'.<sup>2</sup>

#### SOCIAL CHANGE

For economic development and growth to take place and scientific and technological change to occur, the social environment must encourage innovations and new techniques. Most of the non-industrial countries in the world, however, have long and well established cultural and social traditions rooted in a non-industrial, non-scientific economy and social structure. The advanced industrial countries, of course, passed through a period of social and cultural change, but it took place gradually and much had been achieved before the industrial revolution. Gunnar Myrdal<sup>3</sup> points out that the gradual attainment of national integration in Western countries involved a number of non-economic social changes, including: (a) increased social mobility, locally and nationally, which opened up areas for competition and individual advance;

1. Hugh L. Keenleyside, 'Obstacles and Means in International Development', in: *International Development Review*, Vol. 2, No. 1, May 1960, Washington, D.C., The Society for International Development, p. 25.
2. P. M. S. Blackett, 'Technology and World Advancement', in: *Nature*, London, Macmillan and Co., September 1957, p. 475.
3. Gunnar Myrdal, *An International Economy*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1956, p. 169.



(b) social cohesion and solidarity in the nation as a whole, which provided a basis for rules which applied to the whole community and for national taxation; and (c) increased participation by all citizens, at both local and national levels, in the political control of social processes.

Such developments did not take place without political struggle nor without periods of serious social frustration and tension. On the whole, however, economic progress and national integration went ahead in a relatively peaceful, gradual process of social adjustment. The climate from the beginning was one of rationality, belief in advancement, and confidence in the future, and the adjustment took about a century to accomplish. The non-industrialized countries cannot go through the same evolutionary process. Their need for rapid advance is greater, their problems more acute. Moreover, many of these countries represent civilizations with a long history of cultural development. Their social structure is more rigid and their attitudes and ways of life more deeply rooted. To industrialize and reorganize on a scientific and technological basis means the destruction of everything from the past which hinders social mobility, national integration and democratic growth. Technical and industrial development, even in the West, was not achieved without the breakdown of older, simpler, community life and the destruction of traditional cultures.

Those who see rapid industrialization of the non-industrial countries of the world as the only solution for their problems have assumed, too readily, that national communities could adjust themselves psychologically, socially, culturally and politically to economic changes as they took place. Anthropologists however have been quick to point out the differences between the Western countries' readiness for change when they entered upon industrialization and the state of the non-industrial countries now.

These differences provide a real obstacle to rapid development. Clearly the non-industrial countries cannot take off towards industrial growth without the destruction of much that forms their traditional social structure and culture. Clearly, too, they have much in their cultures and ways of life that is valuable and must if possible be preserved. Anthropologists point out that economic change may well have undesirable results in a non-industrial country. They frequently suggest that economic development be gradual. It is just this advice that the non-industrial countries cannot or will not accept. Population explosions demand more than a slow and cautious policy of industrialization; they leave little choice. Governments must use all their resources to industrialize as quickly as possible.

Myrdal believes that<sup>1</sup> some of the bigger social reforms necessary for economic development, if they are well prepared, intelligently directed and explained, will meet no more resistance and have no greater adverse effects than smaller social changes in popular beliefs, social etiquettes and patterns of behaviour. Careful consideration must be given to the actual conditions in each country. The scope and speed of change will depend upon economic and political conditions, but the form and the detailed direction of change can vary; alternatives should be studied carefully before a choice is made.

Industrialization emerged within the framework of Western civilization but industrialization in non-Western countries does not necessarily mean the adoption of all Western values. The preservation of the social values of non-Western cultures is important.

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

There are a number of other factors in the non-industrialized countries of the world which hinder rapid industrialization and the introduction of efficient production methods. Some countries emerging from colonialism have the advantage of soundly trained public services, but others have practically no trained administrators at all. All are faced with a population which is predominantly illiterate. Literacy by itself, of course, provides no assurance of effective adaptation to industrial and social change, but a modern industrial society is not possible without a literate population.

The fact that over half the world's population is still illiterate and that over a billion people in the underdeveloped or the newly developing States are illiterate, represents a major obstacle to rapid progress.

Most of the underdeveloped countries have only a small middle class, and the managerial or entrepreneurial components of such middle class as exists form but a small part of it. Partly as a result of inadequate private capital, partly as a result of the lack of managerial skill, there is little hope in these countries that private initiative can play a leading role in national programmes of economic development. Yet it is the development of a highly skilled entrepreneurial and managerial group in the advanced countries that made possible large-scale industrial organization and stimulated the use of modern technology.

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1. Gunnar Myrdal, *op. cit.*, p. 174.



In a number of the emerging countries there are so few trained people in law, health, agricultural science and administration that political and economic stability is threatened. Of those who have sufficient educational training to play a constructive part, most need additional specialized education to equip them to cope with their new responsibilities. Yet they are too involved; too much depends upon them at this stage to permit them to be freed for further study abroad.

#### THE WIDENING GAP

The nationalist revolution in Asia and Africa, the emergence of many newly independent States, the drive for education, health and economic progress on the part of the poverty-stricken countries; these are all reflections of the swift changes taking place in the underdeveloped areas. Two of the largest countries in Asia, China and India, representing close to half the world's population, have consciously taken off on the road of economic growth and development. Other emergent states are attempting to create the conditions necessary for 'take off'. The underdeveloped countries are becoming 'developing' countries.

But in spite of planned efforts in the underdeveloped countries, in spite of international aid through the machinery of the United Nations and the assistance given by such schemes as the Colombo Plan or Point Four Aid, the gap between the industrial and pre-industrial powers is not closing but growing wider all the time.

Whatever criterion one takes, the picture is the same: increasing wealth, educational opportunities and life expectancy on the one hand and poverty, ignorance and disease on the other. The most frequently used criterion is *per capita* income. In spite of certain weaknesses it is broadly indicative of the state of material development of a country and its people. Today the average income *per capita* in the United States is just over \$2,000. There are in the world 66 countries with a combined population of 1,500 million, in which the *per capita* income—so far as it can be measured in terms of money—is less than \$200 a year. In the underdeveloped countries taken as a whole *per capita* income is falling because population is rising faster than production. In the advanced countries population growth is less than the increase in productivity; thus *per capita* income continues to rise.

World population has shown the same sort of exponential curve as other changes. It took 200,000 years to mark the first billion (1,000,000,000) in world population (in the early nineteenth

century). The second billion came in about 100 years. The third billion, not yet reached, will take about 32 years. It is estimated that if present trends continue the fourth billion will take 15 to 20 years and the fifth billion 10 to 15. For the sixth billion, 10 years at the most will suffice. The advanced industrial countries will not bear the brunt of this explosion. It is estimated that during this period their population will climb from 0.7 billion to not more than one billion. But in 40 to 50 years, five billion people will occupy the present underdeveloped or developing countries.

It is estimated that for economic growth a country must consistently plough back at least 10 per cent of the national income in further capital investment. In the early stages, when the surplus above bare existence level is small, the effort to cut consumption by 10 per cent to provide the funds for capital investment is extremely difficult. In addition, since national income is low, the total investment is not large. When an economy reaches maturity, however, it is easier to invest 10 per cent or more and, since the national income is high, 10 per cent of that income represents resources on a large scale. Available figures indicate that the developed countries of the West are continuing to add to their productive investment at the rate of 10 per cent of the national income.

Professor Blackett draws attention to this point when he says that 'most new scientific and technical discoveries or developments tend to widen the gap still more, just because the already rich countries have the capital to make full use of them, but the poor countries have not'.<sup>1</sup>

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1. P. M. S. Blackett, *op. cit.*, p. 475.



## CHAPTER V

# FROM 'CONTINUING' EDUCATION TO 'CONTINUOUS' EDUCATION

There were three rather interesting features about the Montreal conference all of which, in their own ways, were reflections of important changes. The first was the sense of optimism and confidence displayed by the educators attending. The second was the surprising lack of sharp disagreement on points of principle or policy. The third was a change in stress. Adult education was no longer seen as a 'continuation' after formal school but as part of a 'continuous' educational process.

### GROWTH OF CONFIDENCE

The atmosphere of confidence seemed to arise from two distinct but related factors. First there was the confidence of the adult educators from the newly developing countries. In these societies adult education was already regarded as an essential and normal part of the total educational system. Because of the nature of the problems facing developing countries, adult education tended to be regarded as one of the more important branches of education. The adult educator had status and security. His country's experience in adult education might not be based on a long historical tradition but he himself has never been faced with the disheartening struggle to demonstrate that adult education was more than a marginal aspect of education.

In the advanced industrial societies, on the other hand, the mounting flood of new knowledge was creating a new atmosphere and a greater awareness of the importance of continuing education. Adult educators in the developed countries, whose field of endeavour had so long been considered a marginal activity, could sense that this attitude was changing, and must change. Dr. Roby Kidd, in a speech given in November 1959 to the Association of Public School Educators, Buffalo, USA, gently chided adult

educators in the advanced industrial countries for their lack of confidence. 'Think about our own situation for a moment,' he said. 'On the one hand we claim, and we know, that the time when all men and women will continue to study and learn throughout life is coming, has come. This is the promised land, not only promised but certain. But we must possess it. Yet how timorous we are, how soon cast down. How quickly our moods change. When I was in the United States last August, just three months ago, the talk was all of a state or two and a university or two where appropriations for adult education had been cut down or cut back. And the gloom was very thick; it could be spooned up. But does such action represent a trend or even a recession, let alone a depression or a lost battle (if I may mix my metaphors as wildly as our emotions seem to ebb and flow)? For now, in November, I see that Benjamine Fine in the *New York Times* has said: "Adult education has become the most vibrant and dynamic area of American education today", and hearing this we are once more full of optimism.'<sup>1</sup>

The delegates coming to the Montreal conference from countries with a long and continuous tradition in adult education—countries where the tradition that adult education was a marginal activity was also well established—showed few signs of the doubts and timidity referred to by Dr. Kidd. They, too, showed an assured confidence. At Montreal adult education at the international level seemed to have come of age!

#### EMERGENCE OF AGREEMENT

The lack of sharp disagreement on matters of principle and policy was an even more surprising feature of the conference. The delegates came from a great many different countries and from widely divergent types of adult education organizations. When they spoke, in their different languages, their words were influenced and shaped by conditions in the countries from which they came, countries which differed in religion, in cultural traditions, in economic development, in social structure and in political ideology. A confusion of purposes had seemed almost inevitable.

Yet in spite of these difficulties, delegates were willing to cut through variations based on local needs and to examine the tasks facing adult education in terms of principles meaningful and

1. J. R. Kidd, 'The Goals of Adult Education', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 12 (1960), No. 3, Paris, Unesco, p. 114-15.



valid in all countries. As Commission I stated in its report: 'Adult education differs greatly from one country to another, according to its history and traditions, and the stage of its economic, social and educational development. It might, therefore, seem hopeless to look for principles of universal validity. Yet so much has the world become a unity that there are many principles that hold good for all countries, whatever their background and stage of development'.<sup>1</sup> These principles provided a basis for discussion at Montreal.

The accelerating rate of change had focused international attention on the inadequacies of formal education in childhood and on the need for further education throughout adult life. But much of the credit for the achievement must go to Unesco itself. Its work in the 11 years between Elsinore and Montreal had stimulated a re-thinking of the nature and scope of adult education; temporary differences of time and place could be discarded and the principles which possessed a validity throughout the world more clearly discerned. The interchange of experts, the holding of regional seminars on different aspects of adult education, the publication of *Fundamental and Adult Education* and a series of special studies, all helped to create a world language for adult education.

If Unesco can take much of the credit for the gradual change in world thinking about adult education, there is another almost equally important factor which led to the emergence of this new international conception. This is a wide recognition of the contribution being made both in theory and practice by people from many countries—people such as André Basdevant, Jean Dumazedier, A. Leger or André Terriss in France; G. H. L. Schouten in the Netherlands; Helmut Becker, H. Dolf and H. Fr. H. Voght in Germany; Josef Barbag in Poland; Joseph Vinarek in Czechoslovakia; A. M. Ivanova and V. D. Voskresenky in the USSR; R. M. Chetsingh, J. C. Mathur or Mohan Sinha Mehta in India; Felix Adams in Venezuela or Theodore Haralambides in Greece. Such a list, necessarily far from exhaustive, gives some indication of the international character of adult education thought and theory today.

The contribution of theorists from Eastern, Central and Southern Europe, Latin America and from the developing countries of Asia and Africa, through their writing or through their ideas at regional and international conferences, has been important enough. Yet perhaps more important still has been the impact of the results achieved in actual experimental and pioneering efforts in adult

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1. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *Final Report*, Paris, Unesco, 1960, p. 10.

education undertaken in their countries. In some cases the earlier stages had been influenced by the experiences of countries with an older tradition in this field. But local needs and circumstances have led to strange 'sea changes' in which methods were modified and adapted, often with surprising and significant results. In some cases a completely new start was made, unhampered by adherence to, or even association with, past traditions. Trial and error always wastes some effort but the price paid has often been justified by the lessons learned in the process. As Professor Waller pointed out, fundamental education and community project experiments have thrown new light not only upon problems in developing countries, but also upon those facing countries with a long tradition in adult education.<sup>1</sup>

In France the work of the *Fédération Française des Maisons des Jeunes et de la Culture* and of *Peuple et Culture* (PEC) has bridged the gulf between youth and adult education, developed leadership over a broader range of community and social groups, and encouraged a popular, yet critical, appreciation of culture. The experiments in training social and educational leaders for work in community groups, with stress on disciplined mental training (*l'entraînement mental*), contain lessons for all countries. In addition, 'cine' and 'tele' clubs organized for the critical discussion of films and television programmes have influenced the use of mass media for educational purposes far beyond the frontiers of France.

The work of adult educators in the USSR, particularly in the eradication of mass illiteracy and the provision of full secondary education (through 'Young Workers' and 'Young Peasants' schools) and higher and technical education for adults (through evening courses and correspondence schools), has provided a guide to all countries concerned with establishing an educated society—particularly countries facing the massive task of providing remedial education for all adults. The success of the USSR in arousing popular interest in literature, music, the arts and the sciences has commanded attention wherever educators are trying to raise the general level of popular culture. A good deal of interest has been aroused, too, in the role played and the successes achieved by such organizations as the All-Union Association for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge.

It would be easy enough to point to many other examples of adult education experiments and practices in these countries. Many of these experiments over recent years have influenced both theory and practice in adult education throughout the world.

1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, op. cit., p. 31



The use of audio-visual methods, particularly in radio or television, in countries so widely separated as India, Colombia, or Japan; the 'Worker's Club' type of institution in Czechoslovakia; the experiments in university education in Germany, France and Italy; the library experiments in Spain and fundamental education projects in Latin America, Asia and Africa; all have played a part.

All the developments at national, regional and international levels; all the prolonged re-examination of the meaning and purpose of adult education and of the ways in which the term 'adult education' could be interpreted to give it a meaning to adult educators everywhere; all the experiments tried and experience gained in so many different countries led to a certain clarification of ideas and a greater willingness to compromise in debate. It was this clarification and this spirit which made possible the atmosphere at Montreal.

#### ADULT EDUCATION AS AN 'OVERALL' TERM

The evolutionary process by which the term 'adult education' became attached, particularly in Great Britain, to an important but limited sphere of the education of adults has already been examined. We have had a look at the confusion in communication this practice created when discussions on adult education occurred at the international level. Most countries, however, continued to use the term 'adult education' in an overall, rather than a limited sense, and neither the English 'further education' nor the French *éducation populaire* seemed a satisfactory alternative.

A good deal of thought has been given in recent years to a clarification and definition of the aims and content of adult education. The continuation of this process at the international level has, since the Elsinore conference, led to an encouraging degree of agreement on a number of points. Although adult education is still difficult to define, adult educators throughout the world are now more in agreement about the sort of things it should include.

An indication of the growing awareness of the need for a broader definition of the term 'adult education' is revealed in a recent article on this topic by E. M. Hutchinson. 'One acknowledges, of course,' says Hutchinson, 'that certain organizations in particular historical contexts have been regarded as the most characteristic agents of adult education in their own societies.' But '... clearly the "nature and role" of adult education cannot be defined by reference to the work of any single organization, and

indeed at this time there seems to be evidence that established patterns are undergoing substantial changes and that new forces are emerging in adult education'.<sup>1</sup>

Hutchinson came to the conclusion that the definition he used in 1949 was too heavily impregnated with a specifically British point of view to have value in an international context. He substituted, therefore, a new formula in which adult education became 'organized opportunities for men and women to enlarge and interpret their own living experience'.<sup>2</sup> This was an extremely simple and broad definition but it included, as Hutchinson pointed out, two fundamental ideas: (a) the restriction of 'adult education' to organized activities distinct from cultural diffusion through general reading, theatre and concert-going, press, radio, television, advertising, or the daily contacts of work and home; and (b) the emphasis on voluntary engagement, on opportunities for self-enlargement and self-interpretation. Since it makes no prescription concerning organization and method and no assumption about childhood education, it is a definition sufficiently elastic to include adult educators concerned with communities in different stages of economic and social development.

It would be simple to find a number of other examples which would further illustrate the breakdown, during the 1950's, of the semantic barriers which handicapped adult education before and up to Elsinore. It may be sufficient, however, to conclude with a quotation from Robert Blakely, vice-president of the Ford Fund for Adult Education. In an article on the nature of adult education he stresses that: 'In complexity, adult education traverses every degree from the most simple to the most advanced. In purpose, adult education traverses every degree from education as an end in itself to education solely as a means to other ends.'<sup>3</sup>

By 1960 the term 'adult education' was no longer being treated as having one meaning in one country or group of countries and quite another meaning in other areas of the world. 'Adult education' was recognized as an all-embracing term covering all organized provision for the education of adults, whatever the level and whatever the motivation and purposes. Within its framework could be included a wide range of distinct but related fields which might well be distinguished one from another by their own qualifying terms, e.g. 'higher education of adults', 'liberal education

1. E. M. Hutchinson, 'The Nature and Role of Adult Education', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 10 (1958), No. 3, Paris, Unesco, p. 100.

2. *ibid.*, p. 101.

3. Robert J. Blakely, 'What is Adult Education?' in: *Handbook of Adult Education in the United States*, Chicago, Adult Education Association of the USA, 1960, p. 3.



of adults', 'literacy education for adults', 'vocational education for adults', 'residential education for adults', 'fundamental education', 'workers' education', 'education for leisure', etc. It was this process of clarification of terms during the 1950's which made possible the agreement on principles which was one of the most striking features of the Unesco conference at Montreal.

The Unesco quarterly *Fundamental and Adult Education*,<sup>1</sup> as a prelude to the Montreal conference, initiated a debate on fundamental issues facing adult educators in the second half of the twentieth century. Two issues (Nos. 2 and 3 of Vol. 12, 1960) were devoted to a series of articles which it was hoped would be a reflection of the worldwide re-assessment of purposes, means and objectives in adult education. The debate was expected to reveal contemporary disagreements on the basic role of adult education, but the areas of agreement were much more noticeable than those of disagreement. The editorial to the second of the two special issues drew attention to this unexpected development: 'Read together, these two numbers constitute a fairly searching inquiry into the goals, forms and methodology of adult education. If a *surprising harmony of views*<sup>2</sup> is found among our contributors this has not been achieved by any editorial control. Wide terms of reference were suggested to the authors and each was invited to express freely his or her own point of view.' Certainly 'harmony of views' is far from implying 'identity of views', but the debate in *Fundamental and Adult Education*, like the debates in Montreal, gave a clear indication of the extent to which this harmony had been achieved since the Elsinore conference.

#### EDUCATION AS A LIFE-LONG PROCESS

Acceleration in the rate of change has given an added sense of urgency (a) to the need for the public to think of education as a life-long process, and (b) to the need for more conscious public planning for adult education on the basis of this principle. The concept of education as a life-long process is not new. It was not new, in some quarters at least, in 1949, when the Elsinore conference was held. The '1919 Report' gave form to the concept in Great Britain 30 years before Elsinore. In a covering letter to Lloyd George, Mr. A. L. Smith, chairman of the committee, pointed out: 'That . . . adult education must not be regarded as

1. Now published under the title of *International Journal of Adult and Youth Education*.  
2. Author's italics.

a luxury for a few exceptional persons here and there, nor as a thing which concerns only a short span of early manhood, but that adult education is a permanent national necessity, an inseparable aspect of citizenship and therefore should be both universal and life-long.'<sup>1</sup>

There are many examples of this concept of life-long education in the literature of adult education for the 30 years between the publication of the '1919 Report' and the holding of the Elsinore conference. Professor R. Peers wrote in 1934: 'All education must be a process of adjustment of the individual to the world in which he lives. But since his world is constantly changing, and since he himself is one of the potential agents of change, this adjustment must be a continuous process and not something which is accomplished once and for all during the years of childhood and adolescence.'<sup>2</sup> For many years adult educators had repeated in varying ways that education was a life-long process. Yet these statements were by adult educators and addressed to adult educators. There is little indication that they had any great influence on the thoughts or attitudes of those concerned with other branches of education, even less indication that they influenced political leaders, and practically none at all that they influenced the attitude of the general public. It would be optimistic, in fact, to assume that the concept of education as a life-long process had been accepted by more than a relatively small group of adult educators in a limited number of countries.

Joseph Barbag, writing as late as 1960, pointed out that consciousness of the need for life-long education is far from widespread. The idea of 'permanent or "life-long" education', he pointed out, 'is now being proposed—and rightly so—as a means of enabling people, in the difficult and complicated conditions of contemporary society, to deal more effectively with their personal and social problems. But the consciousness of the need to continue the education of man throughout his entire lifetime is not widespread, and even less widespread are examples of its fulfilment'.<sup>3</sup>

Two new aspects of the approach to adult education emerged clearly at the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) conference held in Washington in 1959 and at the Unesco conference in Montreal. The first, as we have seen, was the general acceptance of a much broader and more sweeping definition of the term 'adult education'; the second was

1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, op. cit., p. 55.

2. Robert Peers, *Adult Education in Practice*, London, Macmillan and Co., 1934, p. 7-8.

3. Joseph Barbag, 'Is There Really a Crisis in Adult Education?' in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 12 (1960), No. 3, Paris, Unesco, p. 124.



the recognition that, if education is a continuous process throughout life, there is need not only for a change in approach and methods in adult education, but also for a complete re-appraisal of methods, approach and curricula in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

At the international conference on adult education organized in 1959 by WCOTP, discussion frequently concerned the argument that different countries at different stages of development required different types of adult education. From the discussions, however, there emerged a general agreement that an adequate programme in any country irrespective of its stage of development would contain common basic requirements. A. A. Liveright, director of the Centre for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults, Chicago, summarized the ideas and principles which emerged:

- '1. Education is not completed when a man or woman leaves regular school and goes to work. It is a continuing process which goes on through life.
- '2. This continuing educational process is concerned with all aspects of life, including the growth of the individual as an individual—with his aesthetic and intellectual development as well as with his physical and vocational development.
- '3. Adults want to and can learn, but their capacity to study and learn is weakened by disuse. It is important, therefore, to provide opportunities for the educational process to continue so that their learning skills are not lost.'

Discussions at the WCOTP conference throw light on the new vision of adult education which is taking shape at the present time. This new vision was given a sharper focus at the Unesco conference. What is new and fresh is the realization that acceptance of the concept of life-long education involves a re-examination of the whole educational system. Elementary, secondary and even university education must be seen not as a preparation for life but as a preparation for adult education. The delegates at the WCOTP conference came to the conclusion that 'most of our present methods and techniques for educating youth and undergraduates must be changed in accordance with these first three principles (i.e., the principles of education as a life-long continuing process). The education of young people must cause them to realize that they are being prepared for further study and learning and that they have not secured their complete education before going to work'.<sup>2</sup>

1. A. A. Liveright, 'Education for Adults: Luxury or Necessity?' in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 12 (1960), No. 2, Paris, Unesco, p. 85.

2. *ibid.*, p. 85.

'CONTINUING' VERSUS 'CONTINUOUS' EDUCATION

Yet, strangely enough, the concept of life-long education—essentially the contribution of education theorists—not only had little effect upon the thinking and practices of educators in the pre-adult areas, but apparently had little influence upon adult education policy and programmes. This policy is still unconsciously based on the idea of education as a 'preparation for life' rather than upon the conviction that education is a continuous life-long process. It is important to look further at the concept of education as a 'preparation for life', and then to look at the extent to which it has fettered and circumscribed the contribution adult education might have made. It throws some light on new conceptions of education which were beginning to emerge in the last years of the 'fifties' and which coloured thinking at the Montreal conference.

As Paul Lengrand says: 'Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the universally accepted view was that each individual life consisted of two periods, of very unequal duration. During the first period, extending from birth to an age determined, broadly speaking, by the resources at the community's disposal, the individual was assumed to be receiving a training which would equip him with the knowledge, ideas and standards of behaviour he would require to carry out the tasks and undertake the responsibilities involved in every human existence. At a given moment, which varied from one community to another, the introductory phase was considered to have terminated, and the individual entered upon the second period of his life—that of adulthood. The transition was emphasized by a series of rites marking the decisive break with childhood and adolescence; a man took on his adult dress and status at the conclusion of his period of apprenticeship.

'In actual fact, this distinction has never been a hard-and-fast one. Children do not always wait to complete their period of initiation before entering upon a serious life. And adults—at least the minority which does not sink into premature slumber on the "soft pillow of habit"—continue to study and to advance along the roads leading to greater knowledge and wisdom. But the division between the two ages of life is reflected in the structure of our educational systems.'<sup>1</sup>

Such an approach to education might have been satisfactory

1. Paul Lengrand, 'Adult Education', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 10 (1958), No. 3, p. 91-2.



enough in an age when a youngster could obtain a stock of knowledge during childhood and youth which would guide his judgments and determine his behaviour for the rest of his life. When it was possible for parents to assume that children would grow old and die in a society which hardly differed from that in which they, the parents, lived, and which their own parents before them had known, then the idea of education as a 'preparation for life' had meaning and validity. Even in such circumstances education would continue throughout life but it could be a slow and informal process. It did not require any organized or systematic educational provision. Such an attitude is no longer valid today when, as Margaret Mead has said, 'we are now at the point where we must educate people in what nobody knew yesterday and prepare people in our schools for what no one knows yet, but what some people must know tomorrow'.

The concept of education as a 'preparation for life' does throw some light on the failure of some teachers and educators concerned with formal education of children and adolescents, to see education as a life-long process. Dr. Kidd dealt with this unconscious resistance on the part of some educators in an address he gave at the National Association of Public School Educators at Buffalo, USA, in 1959. 'Most people in education have failed, as we sometimes have failed, to understand the full meaning of continuing education. They really perceive education as preparation for life. In the deep places of their consciousness and sub-consciousness, this is what they believe, no matter what words they may utter. Their innermost convictions, the springs from which their assurance and satisfaction gush, are all about preparing young people, of setting them off on the path of life, providing them with a purse of truths and habits for life's journey.'<sup>1</sup>

Adult educators as a group were much more conscious of education as a life-long process than their colleagues in other educational fields. Yet they, too, suffered from a vocational disability. They were concerned with adult education, with the education of adults who, in many cases, had received a sound preparation for life in the traditional educational sense. 'Continuing education', to the adult educator, was the continuation of education after formal schooling, after the 'preparation for life' period. They seldom stopped to consider the implications of life-long cradle to grave education in terms of a total educational system based on this concept. If they had, and some are beginning to do so, they would realize that life-long education is not 'continuing' education but

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1. J. R. Kidd, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

'continuous' education and that all aspects of education should be planned as a whole.

Peter F. Drucker takes up this new conception of education. He, too, points out that by and large we still consider that education is something for the young; that when one graduates one stops 'learning' and begins 'working', that we have three or four school systems (elementary, secondary, technical and tertiary); that each was originally intended to be the end of formal schooling and therefore includes in its curriculum a good many unrelated bits designed to introduce the students to important areas. As a result of all this the formal schooling of the young, the preparation for 'working', lasts longer and longer (he points out that when a physician starts practising he is young only compared with the doctors who are about to retire); there is a great deal of duplication in studies and far too much skimming over in the form of a light 'survey' instead of serious disciplined study.

The solution, as Drucker sees it, is that the educated society must accept two new rules: 'First, adult education is as normal in educated society as is the education of children in literate society. In educated society it becomes the mark of individual accomplishment and success for an adult to go back to school for advanced education. In educated society anything that is best learned by adults with some experience and maturity should, therefore, be taught only to them—just as in literate society we expect everyone to learn as a child what is properly learned by children. . . . The second new rule is that higher education does not mean more years of education; it means a different aim. It assumes at the outset that the great majority of children who start in school at the age of 5 or 6 will stay in school for 12 and increasingly for 14 or 16 years—and come back as adults. This then means that all subjects might be directed towards the goal of the educated person, and that all are seen in a sequence rather than as isolated one-shot exposures.'<sup>1</sup>

Drucker is concerned with education in an 'educated society', a goal towards which he believes the industrially advanced countries are moving, and towards which, under the pressure of scientific and technological change, they have no option but to move. The steady rise in national income resulting from increasing industrial efficiency will permit such countries to provide all children with at least 12 years of formal schooling and ultimately 14 to 16 years. Individuals, when they complete schooling and commence work, will be adults, and moreover adults who will

1. P. F. Drucker, *The Landmarks of Tomorrow*, London, Heinemann, 1959, p. 146-7.



continue, and expect to continue, their education throughout life.

Margaret Mead pursues the same line of thought about the contemporary need for a complete re-thinking over the nature of education in the modern world. Concerned mainly with the practice in the underdeveloped countries, she does refer in passing to education in the advanced industrial countries. In doing so she reaches much the same conclusion as Drucker. 'Meanwhile in the most industrialized countries', she says, 'it is being recognized that the kinds of distinction which were once made between "education", the orderly transmission of certain parts of our accumulated tradition to the young while they were still *in statu pupillari* and "adult education", which imparted to adults, in odd hours and off seasons, some things they should have learned when they were young, are no longer meaningful. A great deal of what needs to be taught to adults today was unknown when they were young. Continuing education throughout life has become a necessity in almost every field of life, from housekeeping to atomic physics. The emphasis is no longer upon the mass of materials and skills contained in a "good education", distributed in unequal amounts among the members of different socio-economic groups within a nation, and among the peoples of the world, in which all would soon come to have at least a small and inferior share. Instead, attention is being given to the relationships between old knowledge and old skills, and new knowledge and new skills, and to the difference in ways of learning of children, uncommitted young adults without family responsibilities, and mature adults with responsibilities. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

In the advanced countries the impact of change is emphasizing the need for continuing education throughout life and forcing a fresh reassessment of the whole educational system in the light of this concept. In the developing countries the need for a fresh approach to education is even more pressing. In these countries governments are not so much concerned with the problem of reorganizing their educational systems as with the task of establishing and creating the structure of primary and post-primary education from the ground up. They have the burden but also the advantage of starting completely afresh. If the developing countries attempt to catch up with the more developed countries by copying their educational structure and teaching methods, they may be making a grave mistake.

Elementary education in most of the advanced industrial nations is organized on the assumption that all or most children will pass

1. Margaret Mead, 'The Contemporary Challenge of Adult Education', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 12 (1960), No. 3, Paris, Unesco, p. 107. [Author's italics.]

on to secondary school. The curricula, apart from the accumulated debris of earlier traditions, is designed on that assumption. In the developing countries soaring ambitions are brought down to earth by the harsh facts of limited resources. The immediate aim is to provide elementary education for all children so that illiteracy can be stamped out. Even this limited task is difficult enough. One of the Indian delegates at the Montreal conference pointed out that, even if India devoted 50 to 70 per cent of budgetary resources available over the next five years to the provision of elementary education for children between the ages of 5 and 11, it is doubtful whether such expenditure could assure every child in that age-group access to primary education. Less than one child in ten can hope to pass from elementary education to a proper secondary education.

'As a result', Margaret Mead points out, 'the ideal of universal education which has caught the imagination of peoples all over the world is, in fact, an ideal of raising the bulk of the population of countries now 80 or 90 per cent illiterate up to the standard of elementary third or fourth grade education in countries with established secondary school systems. To the extent that these new systems of education borrow from the modern industrialized world, and teach 6-year-olds as if they were first-year pupils in a 10 or 12 year educational system, the contradictions within them become more conspicuous.'<sup>1</sup>

The problem, as Margaret Mead sees it, is that if the knowledge with which individuals must work, and think, and direct their actions, is changing rapidly all the time then the relative position of the people whose parents were 'educated' in the traditional sense as compared with those whose parents were primitive tribesmen or isolated peasants, is changing also. The accumulation of a great deal of static information in childhood is no longer certain to produce the educated man or give a relative advantage from an educational point of view. The solution, says Margaret Mead, is a complete reorganization of the educational system on the basis of continuous education throughout life with a stress on 'change' rather than on traditional knowledge. Since it is the adults in the developing countries who have to bridge the widest gulf and who are least cluttered up with the burden of 'education' in the traditional Western sense, it may be they who can contribute new models for education, including adult education in a world of change.

The view of education as a 'preparation for life' is on the retreat,

1. Margaret Mead, *op. cit.*, p. 106.



and its conception as a life-long process is gaining ground. As Dr. Roby Kidd put it: 'Continuing education is no mirage in the desert; it is no dream of a religious prophet. Hard-headed, unsentimental engineers, doctors, lawyers, manufacturers now understand that they must continue to study and learn just to keep up with the demands of their calling, as well as to accept the obligations of public responsibility'.<sup>1</sup> The implication in terms of a need to rethink and reshape our whole educational system from elementary to adult education on this basis is just beginning to gain recognition. At Montreal it was decided to recommend to all governments the acceptance of adult education as an essential and integral part of the normal educational system, and the integration of adult education within the framework of an educational system based upon the concept of continuing and continuous education. These decisions indicated that adult educators, at least, were becoming more conscious of the implications of the concept.

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1. J. R. Kidd, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

MONTREAL—TASKS  
OF ADULT EDUCATION

It was against a background of a world in process of rapid, even bewildering change, that the adult educators assembled at the Unesco World Conference in Montreal, or at one of the related conferences held either in or around Montreal—Pugwash (Nova Scotia); Port Elgin (Ontario); Sagamore (New York State); or Saint-Agathe (Quebec). Thus, a consciousness of the nature and scope of the changes taking place influenced and coloured all the discussions and decisions.

At first sight this might seem a little strange. These were conferences of educationists concerned with content of programmes, teaching methods and media, and with problems of structure and organization in the field of adult education. The changes taking place in the world and the problems they raised seemed more the concern of technologists, scientists, industrialists, economists, sociologists, diplomats and politicians. The achievement of 'economic maturity' in the developed industrial States, the implications of the mass consumption society which was emerging, the explosion of Afro-Asian nationalism, the drive for industrialization in the developing countries of the world; these are economic, social and political questions. Yet these changes raise problems and pose questions of choice. To solve the problems and to make the wisest choice men must understand the implications of the changes taking place, the nature of the problems raised and the range of choices available. Understanding is a result of knowledge and both are a product of education.

The goal of the 'educated society' still lies far in the future. No matter how much adult educators would like to be free to concentrate upon that sphere of education which is specifically their own—in that it encompasses subject areas which have no meaning to the young—they are still faced, and will continue to be faced for many years, with the job of helping adults to overcome educational deficiencies arising from weakness in the pre-adult education



system. Resources for adult education are limited. Some selection of priorities in tasks to be undertaken is inevitable. This choice will be determined by the degree of urgency of the problems facing society at any given time and by the extent to which education can assist in their solution.

In discussing the economic, social and political background against which the delegates at Elsinore carried on their deliberations, we saw the way in which that background influenced the delegates' choice of the most important tasks of adult education in 1949. Those included: (a) aiding and fostering movements which aimed at creating a common culture to end the opposition between the so-called masses and the so-called elite; (b) stimulating a genuine spirit of democracy and of tolerance; (c) giving youth the hope and confidence in life that had been shaken by world disorder; (d) restoring the sense of community to people who live in an age of specialization and isolation; and (e) cultivating an enlightened sense of belonging to a world community.

These aims are still important, but the unprecedented acceleration in the rate of change during the 11 years between Elsinore and Montreal was bound to be reflected in some change in emphasis at the second conference. Commission I of the Montreal conference, in its report, drew attention to a number of changes which had to be taken into account when considering the role of adult education today. These changes, the commission stated, were likely to affect adult education in all countries, though not necessarily to the same extent or in the same way. They were brought about by: (a) technological developments; (b) the weakening or even disappearance of traditional cultures, especially in developing countries suddenly exposed to urbanization and industrialization; (c) the growth of nationalism as a powerful operative ideal and the emergence of new national States; (d) the emergence of large power blocs, the political division of much of the world, the immense destructive forces which these blocs now command and a widespread fear of nuclear war; (e) the extent to which technological, economic, social and cultural developments are emphasizing the essential unity of mankind and the increased interdependence of the countries of the world, in spite of the political divisions which exist; and (f) the changing position of women in society, and of the family as an institution.

#### INDUSTRIALIZATION: THE UNPREDICTABLE GENIE

The delegates recognized that men and women faced with changes they do not understand are likely to become bewildered, resent-

ful and hostile. As rapid change is likely to be a permanent feature of our environment, adults must be prepared to accept and live with it. Adult education must help them to understand the nature of change and to recognize the extent to which they themselves can shape and fashion it and control its effects. Professor W. C. Hallenbeck had drawn attention to this task. 'Change is terribly contemporary. To live confidently and comfortably, to cope with ever-changing problems, and to enjoy the potential satisfactions all about them, people must understand change and its consequences and be able to adapt themselves and their institutions to what is a new world in some respects each day. This requires a flexibility of attitudes, perspectives, values and relationships. No matter how effective and contemporary schooling may be it can never fully prepare youths to meet the world as it will be when they are adults. The fundamental function of adult education is to keep the balance between people and circumstances in a changing world. One of the axioms of civilization, democracy, and intelligence is that people can control their destinies. This becomes possible only when people can foresee and direct the changes which are the result of their material and social inventions.'<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Roby Kidd, addressing the Pugwash Conference on Continuing Education, pointed out that industrialization drives and shapes all men, not only in the great urban centres but also in the most remote hamlets. He said that even if in its early stages industrialization was accompanied by conditions degrading to the human body and spirit, it has developed to the point at which its ability to raise standards of living makes it a blessing rather than a curse; yet even today not all the gifts are beneficial—'There can be doom as well as blessing'. Dr. Kidd went on to quote from a recent book by Sir Geoffrey Vickers: 'Industrial development has shown itself everywhere to be a really de-stabilizing force. Each of its phases sets in motion a sequence of changes which tend either to prove self-defeating or to create conditions which men find intolerable. With one hand "industrialization" offers abundance and leisure; with the other it often frustrates the enjoyment of them . . . what is it about industrialization which sets this universal problem?

'The answer I think is simple. Industrialization tends to make a progressive impact on four areas of great importance to human well-being. It changes and restricts our living space; it divorces our social from our economic life; it changes our aspirations and espe-

1. W. C. Hallenbeck, *op. cit.*, p. 30.



cially our concepts of status and success; and it evokes the structure of expectation which underlies both our sense of security and our power of foresight. It is no wonder that our governments, whatever their political colour, have been forced to take notice of such an unpredictable genie among their household servants. I call it a genie, not a devil. To suppose that our new power must necessarily destroy us would be, I think, as mistaken as was our grandfather's naive belief that it must necessarily bring us a blessing. What it does is present us with new choices we are unaccustomed and ill equipped to make.<sup>1</sup>

#### TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE AND THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION OF ADULTS

There has been a tendency, as we have seen throughout the history of adult education, to ignore the field of vocational and professional education of adults. This was understandable. As Commission 1 at Montreal pointed out in its report, the education of the producer—technical and vocational education—is generally well provided for because its economic value is obvious. Non-vocational education for adults, on the other hand, was regarded as a marginal activity, and recognition and support had to be fought for. For these reasons different and separate institutions arose to deal with vocational education on the one hand and non-vocational adult education on the other. Institutions concerned with the technical and vocational education of adults seldom included the words 'adult education' in their name or referred to them when describing their work. It is true that vocational and technical training is normally associated with pre-adult education, with the period of adolescence and youth rather than with adult life. Even those who were prepared to include the professional and vocational education and training of adults within the scope of 'adult education', considered the question of little importance. Vocational and professional training was considered a responsibility of youth education rather than of adult education.

Yet in any modern industrialized society, with changes in demand and modifications in production techniques, some industries are waning while new ones are emerging. Labour must move from those in decline to the new ones, and the new industries may require entirely new skills. There was a saying in the depression years of the 1930's, referring to the price of specialization,

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1. Geoffrey Vickers, *The Undirected Society*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1959, p. 16.

that 'no one was more helpless than the unemployed painter of dolls-eyes'. Today no one is more helpless than the mass-production factory worker who sees automation dispense with his services on the 'conveyor belt'. Technological change has made possible increased productivity, rising standards of living, better working conditions and the 'mass-consumption' society. It has also created serious problems, many of which are just beginning to cause difficulties and have yet to be solved. In the industrial countries these include automation, technological unemployment, vocational instability, and marked changes in the vocational pattern of the economy. The position is complicated today by the fact that the decline in the demand for labour occurs in the ranks of unskilled or semi-skilled labour, while the increasing demand for labour is for skilled or highly skilled labour. There is a lack of mobility in the labour market which can be overcome only by education and retraining.

'Technology is bound to move in the direction of automation, for one of its principles is that manpower should never be dissipated by being used to do what machines can do, because manpower is too costly and too precious. Such a principle, however, cannot be understood nor appreciated by the hundreds and sometimes thousands of workers thrown out of work by technology. Nor does it ease the situation to say that in the long run technology creates more jobs than it destroys and that new kinds of jobs need manpower constantly. There is no long run for men who are out of work and are unqualified for any of the new kinds of work.'<sup>1</sup>

The problems created by technological change can be overcome once their nature is understood. The tasks of adult education as seen by the delegates at Montreal were (a) to help men and women understand the factors behind the instability of vocational life and to help them to acquire attitudes and values based on flexibility and a willingness to change, and (b) to make provision for retraining of adults which takes into account their needs, abilities and interests, and also the new type of vocational opportunities which are opening up. The first category represents the tasks of general adult education while the second represents the special field of the technical and vocational education of adults. Together, however, they illustrate the need for a breakdown of the rather artificial separation between the vocational and non-vocational aspects which has unfortunately characterized adult education in the past.

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1. W. C. Hallenbeck, *op cit.*, p. 32.



THE LIBERALIZATION OF VOCATIONAL  
AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

The report of Commission 1 of the Montreal conference indicated that the delegates were conscious that the sharp separation between general and vocational adult education was no longer meaningful in terms of today's needs. The report states: 'The social disadvantages of this practice (i.e., separation of general and vocational education) are becoming increasingly obvious, and more and more attempts are being made to break down the dichotomy. In France, for example, successful experiments have been carried out in bringing together vocational and general education in the same programme. The experience of Sweden goes to show that vocational education should be related to actual situations, that programmes should be founded on ascertained needs, that these include the human and social aspects of industry, and that the "general education" value depends to a greater extent upon the way the subject is taught.'<sup>1</sup>

In the United Kingdom since the war, the development of the short-term residential colleges has provided a great deal of experience and understanding of the contribution which can be made to the liberal education of adults through courses provided for industrial and professional groups. The content of the courses is a balance between the purely technical and the more broadly liberal. Guy Hunter, in an essay on residential colleges, makes some interesting points about the relationship between vocational and liberal education. 'There is a rough sequence in a working life', he says, 'which the intellectual is too apt to forget. After the first period of school and pure technical training, the worker, for the 10 years from 15 to 25, is pitchforked into practical life—finding and holding a job after marriage and founding a home on small resources—while the intellectual is training himself in handling words and conceptions. It may well be that somewhere between 25 and 35, as the worker approaches a more responsible job, education should broaden his ideas of the nature of authority and responsibility, of the social and human implications of any job, of the deeper purposes of society. Once this broadening process has been started, it may well lead on into history, literature and art. If we take the concept of "the standard of living", it means at 21 bread and butter and the wage packet. At 30 it may include ideas of status, leisure, civic responsibility; at 40 and thereafter it may deepen into a concept of the good life.

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1. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

‘To sum up. Vocational adult education may well provide the bridge, which has been so sadly lacking, between the technical working life and the heritage of human culture.’<sup>1</sup>

The views of the delegates at Montreal on the question of vocational and technical education were a product of the general debate on the nature and role of adult education in recent years, particularly in relation to the problem of reconciling liberal and cultural values with the technical and specialist skills needed in contemporary society. The National Institute of Adult Education (London) sponsored an inquiry into the relationship between vocational and non-vocational elements in adult education and training, and the results were published under the title *Liberal Education in a Technical Age*. Examples of the change in attitude are common. Certainly large-scale business corporations are becoming more aware of the value of a liberal education for executives and management. In 1953 the Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania sent 17 young executives for a 10 months’ course at the University of Pennsylvania. The course included ‘logic’, ‘Oriental history and art’, ‘Indian literature’, ‘American literature’, and ‘sociology’. In 1957 the same company sent departmental heads who had been with the Bell Telephone System for 20 or 30 years into residence at Asbury Park, New Jersey, for a 12 months’ course. The principle behind this action was the belief that executive decisions, to be sound, must be made against a background and understanding of the varying forces affecting the economy. Today, there are more than a dozen universities or colleges in the USA providing courses in the humanities for business executives.

Both the workers thrown out of work by automation, and the managers of large-scale organizations, who face the complexity of decision-making in a rapidly changing society, need not only retraining and professional refresher courses but that broad understanding of society which only liberal education can provide. Just as important are the similar needs of the peasant in the developing countries of the world; he is moving out of the static tradition-controlled culture of the village and taking up work in factories in the growing industrial cities. He needs literacy. He needs training in the new technical skills he must use. But literacy and technical skills by themselves are not enough. He must be offered educational training which will give him the perspective to see changes in terms of national ends and means, which will provide him with the power to exercise some influence on their nature and direc-

1. Guy Hunter, *Residential Colleges: some new developments in British adult education*. New York, The Fund for Adult Education (Ford), p. 47. (Occasional paper I.)



tion, which will make it possible for him to find his place in the new urban community so different from his village environment, and which will enable him to maintain a continuity with the best in his old culture and values.

#### FIVE STEPS TO REALITY

Dr. Quincy Wright, Professor of International Law at the University of Virginia, speaking at the Pugwash International Conference on Continuing Education<sup>1</sup> suggested that there were five considerations to be taken into account if education for adults is to have any meaning under present conditions: (a) the material unity of the world; (b) the moral disunity of the world; (c) the obsolescence of war; (d) the acceleration of change, and (e) the de-Europeanization of the world. The task of adult education is to assist men to see the world of reality, and in the modern world, Dr. Wright suggested, reality includes recognition of all these five factors. These considerations did in fact dominate the discussions at both the Pugwash conference and the Unesco world conference which followed.

Dr. Wright saw education as having four purposes: (a) to continue the culture of the country or society; (b) to enable the individual to make a living; (c) to develop the personality so that an individual may realize his potentialities in the community, and (d) to contribute to public policy and the decision-making of the group. This last type of education is not important in primitive societies which live by custom, and where there is little change from generation to generation, but it is of the greatest importance in the advanced countries or in any community which is undergoing change and development, for, as Margaret Mead expressed in one vivid sentence: 'No one will live all his life in the world into which he was born, and no one will die in the world in which he worked in his maturity.'

'The failure of education for citizenship', Dr. Wright summarized 'has been, I think, the major cause of revolution and of the death of civilization. Science and technology have evolved rather continuously since the cave man up to the modern world. Discoveries in science and inventions in technology are seldom forgotten and each discovery or invention paves the way for two new ones. Thus there is a steady and accelerating progress of mankind in science and technology.'

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1. International Conference on Continuing Education, Pugwash, 1960, *Report of Proceedings*, Cleveland, Cyrus Eaton, 1960, p. 11-A, 1.

‘On the other hand, the faiths, the ideologies and professional skills which direct human behaviour and attitudes and the arts tend to be static; with the result that, while adapted to the situation which existed when they first emerged, there tends to be a wider gap between them and the state of science and technology. When this gap becomes too great, there tends to be revolution and war. The conservatives who want to preserve the traditional culture and skills will resist changes and adaptations to the new situation, whereas the radicals, who wish to abandon obsolete moral ideas and professional skills no longer adapted to the state of science and technology, demand changes which bring them in conflict with the conservatives, often resulting, as historians of civilization like Arnold Toynbee have pointed out, in the collapse of civilization.

‘Education for citizenship, especially adult education, should continuously modify ideologies, faiths and professions so that the gap will never become wide, and consequently the ethical and religious standards of the people will always be adapted to the state of science and technology. This is difficult because people live by their values and therefore the efforts to change those values may destroy the interest of people in life itself. The process must be one of adaptation of old values and not their destruction. Both static reactionaries and radical revolutionism are to be deplored. Rather a liberal policy of continuous gradual adaptation is necessary.’<sup>1</sup>

#### THE MATERIAL UNITY OF THE WORLD

To the educators meeting at Montreal it was clear that one of the major tasks facing adult education was the responsibility for creating in the minds of people a picture of the world which exists today; as it is, and not as emotions and traditional ways of thinking might tend to make people see it. There is need for people to realize that they live not in a local or national world but in a world as wide as the whole of mankind. They must become more conscious of themselves as citizens of the world as well as citizens of their own nations if their contributions to the solution of problems within their own countries are to solve rather than complicate the problems facing the world as a whole. Possibly the major results of man's entry into space may be the psycholo-

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1. International Conference on Continuing Education, Pugwash, 1960, op. cit.



gical revolution which will come when man is able personally, or through televised programmes, to see the earth as one small world revolving in the vast spaces of an expanding universe.

Modern technology has speeded up the means of transportation and communication. The spread of new ideas, new concepts, new knowledge is no longer a matter of slow diffusion but a process which occurs almost with the speed of light. The concepts of the welfare state, of full employment, of social security and the right of individuals to education, health, housing, clothing, leisure, to a fuller and richer life and to a say in the discussions which affect him; these cannot remain special privileges for the inhabitants of the richer, more industrialized countries of the world. Modern communications have carried them around the globe, and ideas with all their explosive potentialities are finding fertile soil everywhere. More people are on the move as transportation becomes faster and cheaper. Already more than half the people who cross the oceans of the world each year cross them high in the air by plane rather than by surface ships. In 50 years the aeroplane has developed from the frail contraption of canvas and wire which slowly lifted the Wright Brothers faltering into the air to the 600 miles an hour jets of today carrying a hundred or more passengers. Already the experimental prototypes of the ram jets which will fly at 1,500 to 2,000 an hour 10 years from now are past the design board stage. From Australia to England will take 12 hours, a journey which little more than a century ago might have taken six months. All the world is being drawn tightly together in the web of modern communications and systems of transport.

It is, of course, not only a matter of the more rapid spread of ideas. It is not merely that the international mobility of people and their contacts have been speeded up by modern methods of transport, important as these factors are.

The world is becoming smaller in more ways than this. Industrialization is also making the world one, however disintegrated that one world may be. Emergent countries struggling to provide the pre-conditions for an effective take-off on the road of economic growth, or developing countries already launched on their take-off to 'economic maturity', can no longer accept with resignation or indifference any reduction in economic activity in the advanced industrial countries. An economic depression in the highly industrialized countries is certain to have repercussions upon the orderly progress of development programmes in the 'developing' countries. Such repercussions will be reflected in (a) a fall in the

world price of primary products and raw materials and, since the developing countries are mainly exporters of primary produce and raw materials, a fall in their own export income; (b) a reduction in their capacity to purchase capital equipment from abroad because of the fall in export income; and (c) a direct reduction in the amount of technical aid, private investment or long-term loans received from foreign sources.

Workers and farmers of the industrially developed countries have been unwilling to accept the fluctuating and uncertain incomes which might result from the unfettered play of competitive market prices and have used the power of their votes to see that governments protect them from too sharp and sudden variations in the price of their labour or produce. In the same way developing countries will not, without protest, permit economic instability in advanced industrial countries to affect their own plans. They are now independent and have a voice in international organizations. Common interests will give them unanimity of voice. Their case will be one that must strike a response. Countries which have accepted the same arguments as valid within their own boundaries and for their own people will find it difficult to dismiss the case for worldwide equality of opportunity and income.

In the draft declarations of the Unesco Conference on Adult Education the relation between the developed and developing countries as members of one world was stated forcibly.

‘These developing countries have few immediately available resources, and great demands on them.

‘The countries who are better off have an opportunity of helping those who are poorer; they have the opportunity of performing such an act of wisdom, justice and generosity as could seize the imagination of the whole world.’

#### THE MORAL DISUNITY OF THE WORLD

The phrase ‘moral disunity’ of the world may not be an altogether happy one. Dr. Wright was not using the phrase in the sense which might have been given to the words by the educators who met at Elsinore. They were perturbed at the sense of a decline in moral values. Dr. Wright was merely concerned with the world situation as it is without forming any moral judgements. There is a multiplicity of religions, ideologies and nationalities, each with different interpretations of values and different formulae of adjustment to new conditions. As Dr. Wright pointed out: ‘There seems little possibility of unifying these numerous differences in any



foreseeable future, and it may indeed be that some differences are necessary because of the differences in climate, natural resources, economic levels of living and other conditions of the various populations. Furthermore, it may be that human progress would end if the competition among societies with different moral and ideological systems were ended. An international world may be better than a cosmopolitan world.<sup>1</sup>

It may well be, as Dr. Wright suggests, that one of the tasks of adult education is to help adults throughout the world to realize that one world does not necessarily mean a world state, a world government or a single world religion, ideology or culture—that a sense of unity in diversity may be preferable to complete uniformity and conformity. The delegates at the Montreal conference were concerned with the role of adult education in the attempt to retain, within the framework of one world, the real values of differing traditional cultures, religious and social customs in countries entering the stage of economic development. The destruction and disappearance of much traditional culture incompatible with Western science and technology was inevitable. It was the price to be paid for industrial development, and the underdeveloped countries were determined to industrialize irrespective of the price.

A group of United Nations experts studying the economic development of underdeveloped countries in 1951 drew attention to this problem. They pointed out that the people of a country must desire progress and their social, economic, legal and political institutions must be favourable to it. 'There is a sense in which rapid economic progress is impossible without painful readjustments. Ancient philosophies have to be scrapped; old social institutions have to disintegrate; bonds of caste, creed and race have to be burst; and large numbers of persons who cannot keep up with progress have to have their expectations of a comfortable life frustrated.'<sup>2</sup>

Delegates attending the 1949 Elsinore conference were concerned with the breakdown of traditional cultures in the industrialized, urbanized societies of the West, with the loneliness of industrial man divorced from the sense of community and a living culture. Delegates at Montreal were concerned more with the destruction of indigenous cultures in the underdeveloped countries under the corrosive effect of Western ideas and Western industrialization.

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1. International Conference on Continuing Education, Pugwash, 1960, op. cit., p. 11-A, 2.  
2. *Measures for the Economic Development of Underdeveloped Countries*, New York, United Nations, 1951, p. 15.

The report of Commission 1, which examined the 'role and content of adult education', saw adult education as a vital means whereby the purely destructive effects of industrialization upon traditional cultures could be avoided—'The best in the traditional culture of each country should be preserved and enhanced, and people should be encouraged to feel pride and dignity in their own cultural heritage. This is especially, but not exclusively, true of those countries that are undergoing rapid development. Not everything surviving from the past is worthy of preservation; what should be kept raises questions of values, which will vary from one country to another. This lack of unanimity is an advantage rather than otherwise, because diversity of cultures enriches the world.'<sup>1</sup>

#### THE DE-EUROPEANIZATION OF THE WORLD

The extent to which European control over countries and populations in Asia and Africa has altered radically over recent years has been examined in the section dealing with recent changes in underdeveloped countries. Dr. Wright in speaking at Pugwash summarized this trend: 'While it may be that Asian civilizations during the Gupta period in India, the Tang, Sung and Yuan Dynasties in China and the Abbasside Caliphate in the Middle East were ahead of mediaeval Europe, after the discoveries and the Renaissance, Europe dominated. The invention of the compass and gunpowder made it possible for European navigators and soldiers to conquer the Americas and to dominate such great countries as India and China. These overseas imperialisms of the great Western nations began to be challenged by the American Declaration of Independence in 1776, and since that date nationalism has been in the saddle and empires have been broken up at an accelerating rate.

'Of the 82 members of the United Nations, 60 have achieved independence since the United States. A dozen new States will probably be admitted to the United Nations during the next year. The San Francisco conference of 1945 perhaps symbolized this movement of the centre of world politics away from Europe. San Francisco is almost as far from Europe as you can get, and at the conference, countries of America, Asia and Africa greatly outnumbered the European States. There is every reason to think that this de-Europeanization will continue. While Greek, Roman and Christian ideas have influenced all people, and

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1. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 10.



European science and technology are everywhere accepted, governments with other traditions and ideologies will exert increasing influence in international politics'.<sup>1</sup>

At international conferences, including Unesco's, the influence of countries with 'other traditions and ideologies' is already being felt. At Montreal in 1960 there were 30 delegates from Asia and Africa as well as a large number from the Middle East and Central and South America. This change in membership made it inevitable that adult education would be viewed within the context of the world situation; and as the educational problems facing the emergent nations were of a magnitude and complexity no longer faced by the Western countries, it was also inevitable that greater attention would be paid to the nature of the problems facing developing countries and the educational implications involved. From the point of view of both developed and underdeveloped countries the growth of nationalism as a powerful operative ideal and the emergence of new national States added to the complexity of international relationships. Commission 1 of the Unesco Conference reported: 'In today's world, international understanding, mutual sympathy and tolerance of different points of view are more important than ever before. Adult education is needed to promote this understanding, to combat propaganda whereby it is impaired, and to put every adult in the way of arriving at the truth. The immense power of the mass media of communication is not always used with this end in view.'<sup>2</sup>

#### THE OBSOLESCENCE OF WAR

The obsolescence of war as an instrument of policy is hardly questioned today as a result of the recent invention and development of nuclear fission and fusion bombs, and the production of intercontinental missile weapons capable of carrying atomic warheads to any corner of the globe. Scientists and political leaders in control of these weapons understand the ultimate nature of these weapons and realize that their use on a mass scale could result in the destruction of life on earth through the widespread dispersion of radio-active dust. Deliberate initiation of nuclear war is no doubt unlikely but the danger of accidental war in a world of tension remains.

The draft declaration of the Montreal World Conference on

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1. International Conference on Continuing Education, Pugwash, 1960, op. cit. p. 11-A, 4.  
2. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, op. cit., p. 10.

Adult Education drew attention to this changed situation and its implication in terms of adult education.

'The destruction of mankind and the conquest of space have both become technological possibilities to our present generation. . . .

'Our first problem is to survive. It is not a question of the survival of the fittest; either we survive together, or we perish together. Survival requires that the countries of the world must learn to live together in peace. "Learn" is the operative word. Mutual respect, understanding, sympathy, are qualities that are destroyed by ignorance, and fostered by knowledge. In the field of international understanding, adult education in today's divided world takes on a new importance. Provided that man learns to survive, he has in front of him opportunities for social development and personal well-being such as have never been open to him before'.<sup>1</sup>

It is understandable that, with technological and scientific change making possible an end to poverty and ignorance, delegates should feel that one of the adult educator's major tasks is to assist people to see the new world as it is and as it is becoming. To carry out this task involves, as Dr. Wright pointed out:

1. Helping people to realize that they do not live just in a local or national environment. They must become aware of themselves as citizens of the world as well as of their own nations if they are to contribute towards adapting national policies to that wider world.
2. They must also appreciate that this wider world cannot be unified on the model of their local or national world. They cannot extrapolate their parochial world to the world as a whole. Every people tends to think that its own value system is the only right and proper one and that other value systems are mistaken if not wicked and false. In a world of many value systems, great tolerance is required.
3. Finally adults must realize that no one can foresee clearly or precisely the nature of the world of the future. All that is certain is that it will be different. An open-mindedness and mental flexibility will be needed to meet and master the inevitable changes.

#### ADULT EDUCATION AND 'THE WIDENING GAP'

The ways in which scientific and technological progress are altering the existing relationships between the advanced industrial powers

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1. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, op. cit., p. 8.



and the developing countries have already been examined. We have seen that the gap between the non-industrialized countries and the industrial nations is widening instead of closing, in spite of sustained effort on the part of the developing countries and regardless of substantial international assistance and technical aid. The developing countries are like the Red Queen in *Alice in Wonderland*; they must constantly run faster and faster just to stay in the same position. Through their own development plans they are managing to run faster and faster but even so they are falling further and further behind.

This situation creates one of the most pressing problems facing the world today. It is becoming increasingly difficult to justify the fact that one-third of the world is getting richer and richer while two-thirds of the world remains sunk in poverty—a poverty which is deepening under the pressure of population increase. Leaders of the developing countries, faced with the task of squeezing 10 to 15 per cent of the national income into capital investment and realizing that, even if they are successful, the amount made available from a relatively low national income may prove insufficient to set in motion the automatic processes of economic growth, are quick to point out that the economic growth of the industrialized countries—on which their present prosperity is founded—was made possible by the exploitation of the colonial areas of the world. They see financial assistance from the advanced industrial countries not as charity but as reasonable restitution.

United Nations experts on economic development have calculated that the annual capital required from abroad by the developing countries over the next decade for industry and agriculture alone—ignoring complementary social investment in roads, harbour facilities, power, education, etc.—just to ensure a modest increase in *per capita* income of 2 per cent a year, will amount to 10 billion dollars. Including complementary social investment, Paul Hoffman<sup>1</sup> believes that 300 billion dollars should flow from the developed to the developing countries during the next 10 years, a total of 30 billion dollars a year. Most of this would be in the form of trade and loans but he maintains that at least 3 billion dollars are needed in the form of technical assistance through international organizations. As the annual assistance made available in this way between 1950 and 1959 averaged only 25 million dollars, the immensity of the task is obvious.

The delegates at Montreal and Pugwash were aware of the

1. Paul G. Hoffman, *One Hundred Countries*, Washington, D.C., The Lasker Foundation, 1960.

'widening gap' and its implication in terms of the tasks facing adult education in the immediate future. The peoples of the advanced industrial countries had to understand what was happening in the world and the nature of the sacrifices they might be called upon to make. The choice, the decisions and the sacrifice would be theirs. The task of adult education was to see that they had the knowledge on which understanding could be based and the wisest decisions made. It could be argued that with wisdom and judgement, large-scale assistance to the developing countries could be made available without the sacrifice on the part of the people of the industrially developed countries becoming insupportable—without, in fact, any serious effect upon the standard of living in the donor countries or upon the stability and development of their own economy. Robert Blakely, discussing this question at the Pugwash conference at Nova Scotia, said: 'In the United States many people have more goods and services than they ever expected to have, yet they are more discontented and unhappy than ever. According to the analysis by Vickers (*The Undirected Society*), industrialization brings about changes at such an accelerating rate that the stability of individuals and of society itself is threatened. The two great protagonists, the USSR and the USA, have probably long since passed the point at which each could destroy the other many times over. Is it not possible that the American people, the Canadian people and other peoples who have reached the level of high mass consumption, could at one stroke do the following things: (a) get more non-material satisfactions out of life; (b) keep their economy at full production; (c) slow down the impact of industrialization upon their lives, and (d) give much more aid to the developing nations? As more and more nations reach this state, and if less money could be spent on armaments (simply because there is no point in killing a person twenty times), the figures called for by Paul Hoffman would look modest instead of startlingly large.'<sup>1</sup>

From the point of view of the developing countries the implications in terms of adult education were even more obvious. The success of the planned goal of closing the gap between themselves and the more advanced industrial powers depended in the last resort upon education. They not only had to establish as rapidly as possible an educational system for the young, from elementary education through to advanced university training, but had to provide educational facilities for the adults who would be responsible for carrying through the far-reaching changes required by

1. International Conference on Continuing Education, Pugwash, 1960, op. cit., Session 8, p. 5.



industrialization and modernization. Efforts to overcome adult illiteracy were regarded as a number one task, though not all the adults in these countries were illiterate nor could all the problems be solved even if illiteracy were wiped out. Much more educational assistance for adults was required and much could be achieved through adult education even with adults who were still illiterate.

The educators who met at Elsinore did not, or could not, devote much attention to the educational problems of the underdeveloped countries, but they did draw attention in their report to one very important and pertinent point. 'All people, whether they have received schooling or not, have to deal with professional, civic, socio-economic, cultural and other questions. We have to remember that even uneducated communities can learn much from visual demonstration, from the cinema, lantern slides, photographs, broadcasts, individual talks, discussion clubs and other media which do not involve reading. In areas where education is backward there is no need to wait until people can read before embarking on an effective programme of adult education.

'While literacy is not indispensable, it does enable people to become independent students capable of educating themselves. It allows them to widen and deepen their knowledge and to share in the great cultural movements which are mainly disseminated through written texts.'<sup>1</sup>

Experience in the Soviet Union and other countries has demonstrated that a concerted attack on mass illiteracy can be successful. The delegates at Montreal knew that overcoming illiteracy was not sufficient in itself, although they may have hesitated to go as far as Margaret Mead, who suggested that 'the essential lack of connexion between the literacy taught in school and a world in which nothing will ever be read except a few government notices and forms makes the whole system into a mockery'.<sup>2</sup> She was talking, of course, about elementary education for village children in underdeveloped areas but much of what she says applies to some of the literacy programmes for adults in those countries. However, the evidence available from experience suggests that illiteracy can be overcome if a serious enough effort is made. The task then is to ensure that reading material is available so that the adult can use his reading skill to the full. The general consensus of opinion at Montreal was that illiteracy anywhere in the world is no longer acceptable. The delegates

1. International Conference on Adult Education, Elsinore, 1949, *op. cit.*, p. 15.  
2. Margaret Mead, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

recommended that a special fund be created under the control of Unesco to be used specifically for an all-out attack on illiteracy wherever it still exists.

#### EDUCATION FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH

Special attention has been focused for some decades on the educational needs of women. This concern has arisen partly from the realization that in many countries women represented a politically and educationally underprivileged group within the community. The '1919 Report' could point out that in the United Kingdom there still existed, even among the leisured classes, a feeling that it was absurd and affected for a woman to desire knowledge for its own sake. Even in an educationally advanced and democratic country like Switzerland, women still have no vote. Certainly women have been conscious of their needs and have become more active in organizing to overcome their disabilities. It is the powerful national women's organizations which have played the most active role in adult education in the countries with older traditions in that education. Professor Waller, speaking of the position in England between 1919 and 1956, could say that: 'In general, the emergence of women in adult education is a dominant feature of the last 30 years; not only are there a number of very active women's organizations, but women out-number men now in WEA classes, and "women's work" is the most flourishing part of evening institute provision'.<sup>1</sup>

In discussing the tasks of adult education in the second half of the twentieth century, the delegates at Montreal recognized that the special needs of women were not less pressing today, but were made even more urgent by the impact of rapid changes. The report of Commission I realized that this was so in all communities but still more so in communities where the 'old patterns of family and economic relationships are changing with bewildering rapidity.'<sup>2</sup> Under these circumstances, the commission concluded, women need help through adult education to learn to understand and fit into the new order of things. In speaking of 'civic and social education', the commission again stressed the importance of education for women. 'The smallest and the most natural social unit is the family. Education begins at home. In the family the part played by the mother is of inestimable influence; she is, indeed, an

1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

2. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 11.



educator, and her particular needs, in this role, must be a matter of concern for adult education. This is not to suggest that this is necessarily her only role, and these her only calls upon adult education. The point is that this is a special role which she must play, and which, if it is to be performed effectively in our complex modern world, requires something more than maternal instinct and mother wit.<sup>1</sup>

The responsibility of adult education for the special educational needs of women cannot be questioned, but its relationship to, and responsibility for, the education of youth is not quite so clear. As Edward Hutchinson has suggested, adult education is concerned with people 'who are in general beyond the age of adolescent dependence and who, whether they like it or not, must largely accept responsibility for their own lives and actions'.<sup>2</sup> The educational needs and interests of youth, he suggests, are quite different and should not be confused with those of adults. Yet a satisfactory distinction between adult and youth is not easy to achieve. In many countries boys are working and earning their keep at 15. Young people can marry at 16 years. Youths can be called up for military service at 18. It is easy to distinguish between a boy of 15 and a young man of 25 but many youth organizations cater for all ages between these two extremes. No hard-and-fast boundary can be set between youth education and adult education. They shade off into each other. The purposes and methods of youth education and adult education are similar and cannot easily be separated. At Montreal, the delegates recognized that the young felt the pulse of change more rapidly than their elders, but that they often rejected existing patterns of life, without having the experience or maturity which would enable them to replace the rejected pattern by something stable and meaningful. Commission 1 pointed out that youth has always constituted a problem; since the end of the second world war it is a problem that has reached disturbing proportions. It is a world problem, this rejection by young people of existing patterns of life, and it requires the sympathetic consideration of their elders. The commission went on to suggest principles which should guide adult education action on behalf of young people. It was considered desirable that as far as possible young people ought to be associated with adult activities; that the young should be put in the position of having to take responsibilities and make their own decisions, and that opportunities for responsibility and decision-making should be given

1. *ibid.*, p. 11.

2. E. M. Hutchinson, 'The Nature and Role of Adult Education', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 10 (1958), No. 3, Paris, Unesco, p. 101.

in group activities. Youth organizations should provide a form of civic education and an opportunity for active participation in leisure-time activities. The education of young people should be concerned with the dignity and value of productive labour, training in responsibility, the development of an affection for their own country and culture, tolerance and respect for those of other peoples, and the teaching of a wise use of leisure.



## CHAPTER VII

# MACHINERY FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AND CONSULTATION

At Elsinore it could be said that 'for the first time adult education leaders and organizations all over the world emerge as a clearly defined group who have stated their intentions and needs in precise terms'.<sup>1</sup> Both the intentions and the needs required continuing consultation and action at the international level, and effective machinery for the purpose had to be created. It is easy enough to look back, of course and draw the conclusion that it would have been wiser for Unesco to act on a different and broader concept of the nature and scope of adult education. It does seem that a great deal of confusion and some unnecessary frustration might have been avoided if Unesco, from the beginning, had co-ordinated and integrated all its programmes concerned with the education of adults within a single Department of Adult Education. Such a department could have embraced all the related divisions concerned with special aspects of the education of adults such as 'liberal education of adults', 'workers' education', 'fundamental education', 'literacy programmes', 'education for women', 'workers' educational travel and exchange programmes', etc.

The Consultative Committee on Adult Education, established on the recommendation of the Elsinore conference, had the responsibility to advise, not Unesco but the Adult Education Division of Unesco. This meant that, strictly speaking, its advice was confined to programmes and activities limited by both the budget and the purposes of this single division. The committee could not appropriately advise upon the work of other divisions even though they, too, might be concerned solely or partly with the education of adults. In practice, no doubt, there was an element of flexibility. The committee, when it did meet, probably discussed and made suggestions about the whole range of Unesco's programmes concerned directly or indirectly with the education of adults. It would

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1. International Conference on Adult Education, Elsinore, 1949, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

be strange if this were not so, for the various aspects of the work are so closely related that it would be difficult for the Consultative Committee or for Unesco to keep them distinct and separate. No doubt in practice, too, the recommendations of the Consultative Committee were treated as recommendations to the Director-General rather than simply as recommendations to the head of the Adult Education Division. Yet such flexibility is not easily recognized by adult educators who have not had the benefit of participating in the deliberations of the committee or who are not fully conversant with the procedures adopted by Unesco in dealing with its recommendations.

In any case, whether or not the Consultative Committee was in practice, if not in theory, advising the Director-General rather than the Adult Education Division, its status and role remained uncertain. It had been formed from the beginning as an *ad hoc* committee which would be called together at infrequent and irregular intervals, and, during the period between the two world conferences, it had kept this temporary *ad hoc* character. Many people had some doubts whether the consultative machinery set up at Elsinore was working effectively, or could work effectively, under these circumstances. These doubts received expression at Montreal. Yet it was almost inevitable that any consultative committee created on the basis of the Elsinore recommendation would take the form of an *ad hoc* committee of this type.

#### BALANCE AND RANGE OF REPRESENTATION

The status of the Consultative Committee as an advisory body to the Division of Adult Education was not the only factor which came to be regarded as unsatisfactory. Its composition was another. It was felt by some, possibly quite unjustly, that Unesco as a special agency of the United Nations Organization could deal with Member States and international non-governmental organizations, but could not so easily deal with national non-governmental organizations, with regional organizations, or with important adult education interests which were not organized on an international basis. This meant that existing international non-governmental organizations could be represented on the Consultative Committee to a greater degree than their actual role in adult education warranted.

The position of the international non-governmental organizations in relationship to Unesco's adult education programmes is of special interest and should be examined a little more closely.



All of them, apart from youth organizations, represent national organizations whose members are adults. Almost all such international organizations at the level of their national affiliates provide programmes for their members which can be claimed, with justification, to have an educational bias. These international organizations value their close links with Unesco. Their active participation in conferences or seminars on adult education does much to make them more conscious of their own role in adult education and of the part which can be played at the national level by their affiliated members. This process in its turn does foster the aims of Unesco and the objectives of adult education. There are now, however, so many non-governmental organizations representing so many special interest groups and with such varying commitments that some distinctions must be made.

Such distinctions have to be made, of course, at both the national and the international level. In deciding what international non-governmental organizations should be entitled to send representatives to international conferences or seminars, some estimation of the degree of commitment to, or involvement in, adult education must be made. A similar evaluation must be made by Unesco when reviewing selection for membership of the Consultative Committee on Adult Education. During this process, however, Unesco finds itself faced with the fact that the international non-governmental organizations with the longest and most active tradition in adult education are organizations concerned with workers' education, i.e., workers' educational associations, trade unions, co-operative societies. In so far as Unesco seeks to balance representatives from non-governmental organizations the committee may lack the experience which would make its deliberations valuable. In so far as it selects representatives from non-governmental organizations on the basis of commitment and experience, there is a strong possibility that the Consultative Committee may be unduly influenced by a 'workers' education' approach.

At a time when newly emergent forces in adult education were not yet organized at the international level the latter situation was almost inevitable. Mention has already been made of the increasing participation of statutory institutions in adult education and the rise of the professional. Representatives of these new forces and groups were bound to feel some dissatisfaction with a situation in which adult education policy at the international level was being determined to a large extent (a) by individuals who, however, gifted, were concerned with adult education only as a side interest in a busy life devoted to other activities, or (b) by professionals who

were concerned too closely with a relatively narrow field of adult education—workers' education.

Some of the difficulties of representation arise from the need to keep an advisory body such as the Consultative Committee reasonably small. This is desirable not merely on financial grounds but also in order that the character of a working committee be retained. With a small committee it is almost impossible to ensure that all important interests are represented and certainly impossible to include all interested bodies. Representation of newly emergent forces in adult education on the committee can only be at the expense of organizations or groups already recognized. It is understandable that non-governmental organizations which value their standing with Unesco and which take a justifiable pride in the international status they have achieved through the long and continuous contribution they have made in the field of adult education, should find it difficult to step down to make way for other and newer interests.

#### A WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR ADULT EDUCATION?

Some dissatisfaction with Unesco's contribution to adult education certainly emerged out of the discussions at Montreal. Much of it was clearly based upon expectations which bore little relation to, or revealed little understanding of, the recommendations made by the delegates at Elsinore. Unesco had called a world conference. It had sought the advice and guidance of leading adult educators and, as its record showed, had attempted to carry out the recommendations made.

In general all the Elsinore recommendations were accepted by Unesco and have been followed up. The Consultative Committee was created. Missions have been sent to developing areas both in Asia and Latin America. Every year since Elsinore Unesco has co-operated with National Commissions and major non-governmental organizations in arranging seminars on problems of particular interest in adult education, both at the national and international level; international summer schools have been organized, and Unesco has published the quarterly journal *Fundamental and Adult Education*. All these efforts have had a most stimulating effect upon adult education, upon the outlook of adult educators throughout the world, and upon the thinking of the Unesco Secretariat itself.

Yet in spite of the achievements there was a strong feeling (a) that Unesco was devoting too small a proportion of its total



budget to adult education even if the term 'adult education' was interpreted as loosely as possible; (b) that Unesco's efforts in adult education were too dispersed and unco-ordinated to be fully effective; and (c) that the consultative machinery for adult education established at Elsinore was no longer appropriate to the tasks. It was felt that existing machinery for advice and consultation was not altogether satisfactory, and some thought was given to the idea of creating a World Association of Adult Education which (a) would bring together at the international level national organizations in adult education which could not at this stage be recognized by Unesco, and (b) could undertake a type of liaison and co-operation between national and regional groupings which might not be possible through Unesco. The United States delegation brought forward definite recommendations for the forming of a World Council on Adult Education, which they suggested should be subsidized for the first five years by Unesco. This recommendation is important even though it proved unacceptable to the delegates at the Montreal conference. It did help to clarify the position by putting down in black and white what an alternative to the existing Consultative Committee might amount to, and by pin-pointing the sort of tasks the world organization might undertake.

It is clear that even the United States delegation had not thought out an actual constitution for such a World Council in any detail, except to suggest that membership should be representative of national non-governmental adult education organizations and international non-governmental organizations primarily concerned with adult education.

The purposes of the suggested World Council were:

1. To advise Unesco on policies and programmes involving the utilization of adult education resources throughout the world.
2. To support and strengthen the existing agencies of adult education in the Member States of Unesco.
3. To ensure a sharing of knowledge and experience between the newly developing countries and the industrialized nations of the world.
4. To serve the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies in a consultative capacity on adult education issues and problems referred to it.
5. To identify specialists in all Member States who could serve the world-wide needs of the adult education movement.

The purposes as outlined in the American recommendations indicate that the World Council when established would take over the work of the existing Advisory Committee on Adult Educa-

tion and would replace it. In addition, however, it would carry on independently many of the tasks which at present would be regarded as coming within the direct responsibility of Unesco. It was this difficulty of separating the functions which were appropriate to the proposed World Council from the functions which clearly must remain the responsibility of Unesco that led, after full discussion, to the withdrawal of the American recommendations. Delegates recognized that what they sought was a more sustained and co-ordinated programme through Unesco rather than the setting up of a new world organization to take over part or all of Unesco's work in adult education.

The discussion at the Montreal conference revealed that dissatisfactions were based not upon an inherent weakness in Unesco's structure and policy but upon confusion in the adult education movement itself. The Ukrainian delegate summed up the views of the delegates at the end of the debate when she quoted an old Ukrainian proverb: 'Parents always think their children cannot see', which the interpreter translated into English as 'Too many cooks spoil the broth'. Actually the first wording was more appropriate. It was the adult education movement through its leaders at Elsinore and elsewhere which had fathered Unesco's policy in adult education. Unesco had sought their advice and followed their recommendations. If there was a certain confusion in purpose and principle, in policy and practice, this was a reflection of the confusion which existed within the international adult education movement.

The Unesco Secretariat was in a better position to recognize the weaknesses in the earlier administrative structure and in its earlier programmes than were the delegates at Montreal. It had to learn by trial and error but it had so learned. For some years before 1960 there had been a gradual change in direction in both programmes and policy. Unesco, more than any other organization was responsible for forcing adult educators to re-examine the purpose and nature of 'adult education'. Before the delegates met at Montreal, Unesco had already reorganized its administrative structure to bring all the sections dealing with the education of adults within the framework of a single division, which had been given the title 'out of school education'.<sup>1</sup> This represented a big step forward towards a closer co-ordination and integration of Unesco's efforts in the field of adult education.

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1. Since the Montreal conference the division has been given the name 'Adult Education and Youth Activities'.



## REORGANIZATION OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

At Montreal discussions on questions of international co-operation in adult education and the debate on proposals for establishing a World Council did help to clarify ideas and make a measure of agreement possible. There was a recognition that two related issues were involved:

1. How can Unesco attain its short and long-term objectives through adult education? From whom should Unesco seek advice in regard to adult education? What should be the status of any advisory or consultative body?
2. How can people and institutions who are professionally and directly concerned with adult education as a matter of *organization, process and content* strengthen their own relations? In doing so they would serve their own work better and, to the extent that they succeeded, serve the purposes of Unesco; it is therefore in the interests of Unesco to assist them.

There were, therefore, two viewpoints about what should arise from the deliberations at Montreal. The first, as we have seen, was the suggestion for the creation of a World Council on Adult Education with independence of action but fitting loosely within the broad framework of Unesco and financially aided by it. The second was based on the conviction that the development of international contacts should remain a function of Unesco, and that what was required in the future was (a) better budgetary provision and a higher status for adult education within Unesco; and (b) a strengthening of the Consultative Committee for Adult Education, providing for a permanent nucleus of members drawn from non-governmental organizations directly concerned with adult education and for meetings at definite and regular intervals.

In considering these two related points of view, Commission 3 and its special drafting sub-committee examined the objectives which it believed to be implicit in any attempt to develop more effective international contacts in adult education. The main objectives were:

- ‘(a) To strengthen Unesco in carrying out its major purposes, such as the attempt to eradicate illiteracy, to establish a world clearing house for education and to promote adult education throughout the world.
- ‘(b) To facilitate regional action (seminars, training courses, etc.) which contribute to Unesco’s purposes as a world organization.
- ‘(c) To increase the possibility of personal contacts between people directly responsible for the provision of adult education.

- '(d) To develop mutual understanding by encouraging people from different countries to meet for travel, study and discussion in educational settings.
- '(e) To encourage the work of Unesco and of existing national and regional centres which are open to people from more than one country, and to support the development of new centres as necessary.
- '(f) To increase the international usefulness and circulation of publications, audio-visual material, etc., produced by Unesco, by public and private agencies in Member States and by international non-governmental organizations.'<sup>1</sup>

An examination of the objectives defined by the commission indicates that they are, on the whole, the type of objectives appropriate to a strong and effective committee advising and working with Unesco rather than those of an independent world association on adult education or a world council of the type suggested by the United States delegation. The commission, therefore, recommended that the Consultative Committee should be reorganized and strengthened rather than replaced. The text of the actual recommendation adopted by the full conference is as follows:

- '1. There should be established within the framework of Unesco a committee with a permanent status and a known basis of membership, to continue the work done by the Consultative Committee on Adult Education since 1949.
- '2. Within the limits of the possibilities set by the constitution of Unesco, the Director-General should have regard to securing the services, in the first place, of persons with specific experience:
  - '(a) in governmental activities of Member States in the field of adult education;
  - '(b) in major agencies of adult education, e.g., workers' education, public and voluntary evening school programmes, university extension, residential folk high-schools, centres, and agencies for the production of the instruments and means needed in the development of adult education, including those particularly concerned with the mass media of communication;
  - '(c) in non-governmental organizations not included in (b) above which demonstrate in their programmes and actions a high degree of educational purposefulness and which provide ways through which Unesco can communicate with the peoples of the world;

<sup>1</sup>. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 26.



- (d) in national and regional organizations established to encourage co-ordination of effort between different adult education agencies.
3. The Director-General may wish to invite additional members to serve on the proposed committee when particular problems or projects are under consideration.
4. The committee, in addition to advising Unesco, should have as an essential purpose the further development of communication and exchange of experience between Member States and amongst those professionally engaged in adult education.<sup>1</sup>

The confusion of definition which had handicapped communication at the international level had been overcome. Unesco had reorganized its administrative structure to ensure a more co-ordinated and integrated policy in adult education. The strengthening of the machinery for international consultation and co-operation through the reorganization of the Consultative Committee on Adult Education would be a further factor clearing the way for the rapid development of the adult education movement at world level. If adult education leaders and organizations emerged as a clearly defined group at Elsinore, 11 years later this group was in a position to state its intentions, its objectives and its needs with greater clarity and force.

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1. *ibid.*, p. 31.

## CHAPTER VIII

# STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

If education is to be treated as a continuous life-long process then adult education will be concerned with the educational needs of all adults after the completion of their period of formal schooling. Adults, however, will differ both in the range of their educational interests and in the extent of their intellectual capacity. Adult education in the sense of 'organized' educational programmes must take into account both the bewildering array of needs to be met and the varying levels at which assistance is sought. It will be concerned with educational activities which range from the simplest to the most advanced courses which may well involve programmes at post-graduate level. No single institution can hope to deal adequately with all the educational requirements of the adult population within any given community. The adult education field is characterized, and is likely to continue to be characterized, by a multiplicity of institutions and organizations concerned with meeting these needs at different levels.

In the midst of this multiplicity it is often difficult to see the wood for the trees. A close examination reveals that there are organizations and institutions which recognize the nature of the role they are playing in adult education and they often use the words 'adult education' in their title or name, or embody it in the terms of their constitution and objectives. On the other hand, some of the best examples of adult education work at the present time are not regarded as adult education by the bodies themselves engaged in the activities.

Although the field is characterized by its diversity, some effort must be made to reduce it to order. 'Adult education', says Robert Blakely, speaking of the institutional organization of adult education in the United States, 'is carried on by established educational institutions, from elementary schools through universities. Much is formal, but perhaps even more—certainly an increasing percentage—is informal.



Adult education is carried on by informal educational institutions such as libraries, museums, theatres, orchestras, etc. These are becoming more aggressive and skilful.

'Adult education is carried on by our social organizations—corporations, unions, government agencies, etc. Some of this is "within the family", some in co-operation with educational institutions.

'Adult education is carried on in the vast skein of voluntary organizations in the United States: churches; neighbourhood groups; community committees, clubs and councils; state, national, and international associations, societies, federations, leagues; and so on—and so on. Increasingly—as issues become more complex, as we become more interdependent, as the currents of change quicken—educational activities for adults (called that or not) are multiplying.'<sup>1</sup>

In describing the institutional organization of adult education in his own country, Robert Blakely has painted a picture which would not prove unfamiliar to adult educators from other countries with a similar tradition in organized adult education. It is, moreover, a picture which has some relevance, allowing for differences in the educational, social and cultural background, to the pattern of structure and organization emerging in countries which have more recently entered the adult education field.

There is a certain significance, too, in the order in which Blakely places the various categories of organizations and institutions concerned with adult education. He starts, for example, with established educational institutions, 'from elementary schools through universities' and ends with the 'vast skein of voluntary organizations'. I would not suggest that Blakely deliberately placed the categories of institutions or organizations in a graduated and descending order of importance, or that he, himself, intended the order in which he placed them to have any particular significance. But whether conscious or unconscious, by accident or design, the order in which he listed various types of institutions does bring to the surface a switch in attitudes about the organization of adult education which has been taking place in recent years. It is a change which was already becoming apparent even in 1949 but the reaction of the delegates was to resist and deny rather than to recognize or accept. Certainly at Elsinore, if the classification of institutions was in order of importance, would have started with the voluntary organizations and then listed

1. Robert J. Blakely, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

the other types of institutions or agencies. It is doubtful, however, whether many delegates would have included in their definition of 'voluntary organizations' many of the kinds Blakely includes in his 'vast skein'.

#### VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS IN ADULT EDUCATION

It is perhaps natural, in the early stages of any new social movement, that voluntary spirit and voluntary organization should be the characteristic feature. The need for a new social venture or a new social institution has to be discerned and the methods for meeting the need demonstrated, before community-supported institutions are established. It is individuals or small groups of individuals who first recognize a need and take the tentative steps to construct an organization which can meet it. Elementary education was at first provided by individuals or voluntary organizations rather than by the State. The early libraries were provided by literary or mechanics' institutes but, once the value of the service was recognized, the provision of public library services became an accepted community responsibility. The services of untrained voluntary workers were replaced by those of trained professional librarians. The mechanics' institutes demonstrated the need for scientific technical education to broaden and supplement the apprenticeship training received by artisans in the factory and, having demonstrated the need, they were then replaced by a network of State-supported technical schools and colleges staffed by professional teachers.

In much the same way adult education was pioneered by individuals, and by the voluntary movements and organizations they founded or inspired. Much was achieved, and much is still being achieved, by the voluntary co-operation of adults and the efforts and activities of the organizations they serve. Yet with the growing demand for adult education, with increasing pressure on governments to finance adult education facilities, there is a tendency both for statutory bodies or government departments to undertake many of the functions performed previously by voluntary organizations and for the amateur to give way to the professional.

It would be easy to jump to the conclusion that the voluntary organization spirit was on the way out in the field of adult education, that adult education was following the road of libraries and technical education, and the many social services which were once the realm of the charitably minded volunteer.



Adult education, however, is more than a service. It has certain characteristics which make it particularly lively and vital when it has the freedom and flexibility of voluntary organizations. These qualities were recognized by the delegates attending Commission 3 at the Unesco conference in Montreal. The arguments for and against the dominance of voluntary organization in the field of adult education arose out of a consideration of the part that should be played by governments in adult education at this stage of its development.

The points put forward by those who believed in the importance of the part played by voluntary non-governmental organizations, and who had grave doubts whether many of the more important qualities which characterized adult education in the past could be retained if it came under the direct control of governments and public institutions, could be summarized as follows:

1. Adult education is voluntary and its organizations should reflect this characteristic.
2. It should deal with controversial issues and no government institution can deal with contentious subjects with the frankness possible in voluntary organizations.
3. Public institutions suffer from the danger of bureaucracy but voluntary bodies can retain a flexibility which permits them to be both venturesome and experimental in approach.
4. In the fields of creative art government influence and control may prove sterile.
5. Voluntary organizations can do much to create a public opinion favourable to adult education.
6. In a democratic society participation in voluntary organizations represents an educational experience.

These were important claims to make on behalf of the voluntary non-governmental organization. At Montreal there seemed to be common agreement concerning the general thesis that voluntary organizations play, and will continue to play, an important part in adult education; many delegates, however, did question whether they could hope to play quite the same role in the future as they had done in the past. Many people wondered whether statutory bodies or public institutions were necessarily rigid or cautious or reluctant to undertake experimental work; or whether they had such a deadening effect upon the creative arts and culture. However, even if the first of the six points was regarded by a number of the delegates as not very meaningful and points three and four somewhat exaggerated, if not untenable, the validity of the arguments put forward under sub-section two, five and six, could not be questioned and the case for the continued

participation of voluntary organizations remained strong.

If, however, governments are to recognize education as a lifelong process and to accept adult education as an essential and integral part of the total educational system some change in the relative responsibilities of voluntary organizations and public institutions is bound to take place. If governments undertake responsibility for the provision of adult education facilities, they can hardly leave this provision to chance. Voluntary organizations tend to concentrate upon special fields of interest and to attract special audiences. Some sections of the community may be overlooked and important community needs may be ignored. The whole community is involved; expressing itself through its existing state institutions, it must take into consideration the whole range of its needs and interests and must take the responsibility for ensuring that all adults have access to a diversified range of educational opportunities.

In certain countries, voluntary action has a long history and tradition. Strong voluntary organizations have arisen. The growing responsibility of the State in the field of adult education would not necessarily reduce the activities of these organizations—they might well be extended with government support and financial assistance. If the conclusions emerging from the Montreal conference are accepted, however, the urgency of the need for an expanded adult education system is so great that, even in these countries, the adult education programmes of public institutions are likely to increase at an even more rapid rate than the contribution of voluntary bodies.

In the developing countries where no tradition of voluntary leadership in adult education exists, and where the educational problems are urgent, governments must take the lead. The structure and organization of adult education from the beginning will be based upon the dominance of public institutions and statutory bodies rather than upon the leadership of voluntary organizations. Such organizations will eventually emerge and play their own significant part but voluntary organizations do take time to form and to gain experience and maturity.

Increasing participation by community-established institutions does not necessarily mean any reduction either in the significance of the role played by voluntary organizations or in their freedom of action. In the discussions at Montreal it became clear that in countries where the government is most conscious of its responsibilities and where the contribution of public institutions is greatest, the number of voluntary organizations concerned with one aspect or another of adult education increases rapidly.



In Czechoslovakia, for example, a network of clubs has been established whose aim is to provide facilities for adult education, particularly in the fields of science, economics, and culture. The government may have taken the initiative but, as was made plain in the resolutions arising from an International Seminar on Adult Education, held at Prague in July and August 1960, it was intended that these clubs should be voluntary organizations dependent upon local interests and voluntary effort. In the words of the Prague recommendation: 'The mainspring of club activities in the future should be the creative voluntary work of the people. The largest part of the educational and organizational work should be done by voluntary workers. In this manner clubs can become places for people to engage in the effective study of the management of public affairs.'<sup>1</sup>

Professor R. D. Waller refers to the position of the voluntary organization in the United Kingdom in the face of the growing importance of statutory authorities. 'As the statutory authorities have come into the centre of the field and as adult education has become more and more professionalized and institutionalized, how has the voluntary spirit been affected? Everybody assumes it is essential—it was the main theme of both the "1919 Report" and the recent Ashby Report of 1954.'<sup>2</sup> The former tells us that adult education is a voluntary movement, without endowments, the machinery for a corporate life or the support of continuous and localized institutions. But adult education in Great Britain today is too diverse and well-founded to be called a movement any longer; and it has in fact nowadays the support of localized institutions. Did the sacrosanct voluntary principle really belong to the days when adult education really was a movement, a voice crying in the wilderness? Is it less important now that the movement has created a permanent statutory provision of education "from the cradle to the grave?"

'No; the difficult, pioneering, controversial tasks are in the long run the most important, and for them the voluntary bodies are still necessary. Independent voluntary organization seems to be a permanent characteristic of democratic societies and one of the surest safeguards of their health. There are more of them working in the cultural sphere nowadays than there were at the time of the report. It appears that sixteen such societies were at work in Wolverhampton in 1919; now there are about eighty.

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1. International Seminar on the Role of Club-Type Institutions in Adult Education, Prague, 1960, *Recommendations*, Paris, Unesco, 1960, p. 79.

2. *The Organization and Finance of Adult Education*, London, HMSO, 1954.

In Manchester there were then about sixty; now there are more than one hundred.<sup>1</sup>

#### SCHOOLS AND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

One of the interesting trends at the Montreal conference was the increased stress placed upon the need for greater involvement of schools and teachers in the work of adult education. The French delegates pressed for the full utilization in the interests of adult education of 'the premises and teaching material available in the various types of schools and universities', and also stressed that adult education 'necessitates the fullest co-operation on the part of all persons suitably qualified by their general education, their professional training or their teaching experience'. The French delegates in moving this recommendation pointed out that the greater use of teachers will have beneficial effects on teacher training and on school and university education since the regular contacts created with the community by school and university will keep them more closely in touch with the 'live forces on which progress in each country depends'.<sup>2</sup>

The report of Commission 3 of the Montreal conference also drew attention to the possibility of schools and the teaching profession playing in the future a more important role in adult education. 'We entrust teachers', says the report, 'with the education of the whole child (vocational, aesthetic, cultural, civic and human values). Teachers do work with adults. With training they could do it better, and more teachers could be involved. Schools have resources which should be available to adults as well as to children.'<sup>3</sup>

This change in attitude is quite marked and appears to be related to the growing recognition that 'adult education' cannot be treated as something quite distinct and separate from other branches of education but that it is an integral part of a continuous educational process. Just as elementary education should be regarded as a preparation for secondary education and secondary education as a preparation for higher and tertiary education, so all should be seen as a preparation for continued education throughout life.

In many countries both elementary and secondary schools

1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

2. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

3. *ibid.*, p. 23.



have for some time provided educational facilities and programmes for adults. On the whole their contribution has been in the sphere of 'remedial' education. They have provided courses in elementary education for adults who have missed a formal education in early childhood, or for migrants from other lands. Increasingly they are providing secondary education for adults who have gone straight from elementary school to work. They have, above all, supplied technical and vocational training for young adults. They have made little contribution until recent years in the field of education which is specifically 'adult'.

Partly because of the emphasis of the role of voluntary organizations, and partly as a result of a fear of bureaucracy and inflexibility, many active adult educators have doubted whether State departments of education, their schools or their teachers, could contribute much in the field of non-vocational education for adults. The '1919 Report' declared with great confidence that 'adult education is the province of the amateur and that it can never be dominated by a caste of professional teachers'. Referring to the local education authorities, the same report expressed doubts whether they would take steps to provide facilities for the study of non-vocational subjects for adults. As Professor Waller points out: 'The committee was too pessimistic, growth in this field being perhaps the most important development in the English adult education system of our time; as in so many other spheres, generations of voluntary effort resulting at last in a regular and normal statutory provision.'<sup>1</sup>

As late as 1945, we find a 'Consultative Committee', appointed by the New Zealand Government to examine and report upon the structure of adult education in that country, stating in their report: 'In rural areas or small towns, valuable work in adult education may be done by some teachers in State schools. All these are activities which may be carried on with advantage under the auspices of the State. But the major field of adult education should not, in our view, be administered as part of a State department. All witnesses who attended before us and expressed an opinion on the point agreed in this view.'<sup>2</sup> Yet here again one of the most important developments in adult education in New Zealand since the report was published has been the rapid expansion of the non-vocational adult education programmes of the schools under the flexible provisions of the 'Manual and Technical Regulations'.

1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

2. *Further Education for Adults*, Wellington, New Zealand, Council of Adult Education, 1947, p. 54.

There are certain advantages in making full use of the school and the teaching profession in adult education, particularly at this stage of development. Schools are strategically placed in relation to the community. Their buildings represent a sizable capital investment belonging to the community which should be available not only to the children during the day but to adults in the evening, and during weekends and vacation periods. Schools possess teaching equipment in the way of laboratories, blackboards, maps, projectors, tape-recorders, craft equipment and so forth, which again should be used by the whole community rather than by the children alone. Schools have teachers expert in many fields. In many communities, particularly in rural districts, the teachers represent one of the main sources of part-time tutors for adult education classes. It could be argued that many teachers, trained in child education, have neither the understanding nor the ability to deal quite so adequately with adults or adult education. This is no doubt true in many cases, but with training more of them could play an effective part. In the same way school buildings are designed for the formal education of the young and neither their furniture nor the classroom facilities create an atmosphere conducive to adult education. The answer is not to dismiss the schools as possible centres for continuing education. The addition to existing school premises of some buildings or rooms designed for adults' use would involve less capital expenditure than the erection of completely separate buildings. Moreover, such additional facilities could be used by schoolchildren at times when they were not required for adults, with a consequent economy in the use of all available facilities.

The teaching profession is becoming more aware of the role that schools and teachers can play in adult education, and this was indicated during the international conference organized in Washington in 1959 by the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession. Arising out of the conference discussions, the WCOTP formed a special committee on adult education to advise it on the steps to take to stimulate the more active participation of teachers in adult education. This committee met at McDonald College, Montreal, just before the Unesco World Conference at McGill University. The task of the committee was to plan a three-year programme aimed at (a) leading toward the improvement of adult education within the regular educational systems in various parts of the world, and (b) forming a closer relationship between adult educators and other sections of the teaching profession, and developing an increasing awareness of the concept of life-long learning.



## UNIVERSITIES

Universities are specialized institutions of higher learning. They evolved out of informal communities of scholars. In the earlier stages of their evolution they performed three functions on behalf of the community. Through the continuous study of scholars they maintained intact the accumulated knowledge of the past; through original research they added new knowledge to the existing stock; and through teaching they transmitted their knowledge to the next generation of scholars. With the passage of time they performed additional tasks. Many of their students were not fitted by temperament or ability to become, in their turn, scholars. The education and training they received prepared them for active leadership in the community; at first in the church, law, education, medicine or political administration; later in science, engineering and commerce. Because of their specialized functions and their remoteness from the market place, the universities scarcely appeared to be institutions which could make a significant contribution to adult education; in fact, in many countries of the world today they continue to remain aloof. Yet the constantly changing needs of society under the pressure of industrialization has resulted in new demands upon our universities, and their self-imposed isolation is breaking down. Dr. C. O. Houle, of the University of Chicago, has drawn attention to both community claims and university response: 'The companies of scholars within the universities are aware that they have somehow failed to do their part in preventing or curing the most serious ills of contemporary society. With a sense of humility and hope, some of these scholars have in recent years considered with care the mission imposed upon them by the realities of their time and have projected new courses of action for themselves. Their boldest decision has been to move directly into the main current of social life to help mature and responsible men and women find better answers to their private and public problems through the unending processes of education.'<sup>1</sup>

To the tasks of maintaining intact the culture of the past through study, the advancement of knowledge through research, the transmission of knowledge through teaching, and the training of the young for professions or leadership in the community, was added a new function—a responsibility for disseminating knowledge more widely in the community through extension programmes aimed at adults. This conception of the new role of the university has

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1. *Universities in Adult Education*, Paris, Unesco, 1953, p. 9.

been given form and shape in the speeches and writings of a number of outstanding scholars over the last 50 years, and has been embodied in a number of special reports prepared or published by university committees. From the report of the joint committee of university and working-class representatives which studied the question of the relationship of the university to the higher education of adults in 1907 (published under the title *Oxford and Working Class Education*) to the report of the President's (USA) commission on higher education, published in 1947 (*Higher Education for American Democracy*), there has been a stream of articles, speeches, reports all emphasizing the new responsibilities of the universities in a modern scientific world. It will be sufficient to quote one example as an illustration. President N. A. M. MacKenzie in his report to the University of British Columbia in 1953 stated: 'The three functions of a university to which I have already referred, the accumulation of new knowledge, the perpetuation of our cultural inheritance, and professional training, are all thoroughly accepted by both the university and the supporting public, though there will be continuing arguments about the relative emphasis which should be given to each. . . . There is, however, another primary function of universities in our kind of society, another absolute need—even less understood—to which I would like to pay particular attention at this time. I refer to university extension—community services in adult education.'<sup>1</sup>

Reference has already been made to the work of the universities in the United Kingdom, both in the field of extension lectures and in the field of sustained study in tutorial classes. Similar histories of active involvement in adult education characterize the universities of North America and in all countries where the pattern of university organization has been based upon British or American models. It is likely that this earlier participation of the universities in adult education was connected with social and industrial change. It was in England and in the United States that industrialization had either its earliest, or, in the case of the USA, its most spectacular impact. There are signs that in other industrialized countries reaching economic maturity, and facing changes inseparable from accelerating technological development, or the social and psychological problems associated with a switch from a 'scarcity' economy to a 'mass-consumption' society, demands are also being made upon the universities which are now too insistent to be easily dismissed.

1. *The President's Report, 1952-1953*, Vancouver, University of British Columbia, 1954.



The Scandinavian universities have been active in adult education since the 1930's, even though in the early stages this participation was based on the informal activities of graduate and undergraduate students rather than on official university action. Over the years, however, official participation has increased. There are signs that the Scandinavian universities may follow the evolutionary path of the English-speaking institutions with the establishment of internal extension of adult education departments. In other European countries, Germany, France, Italy, the universities are making a hesitant beginning. They are undertaking interesting experiments in an effort to discover the exact nature of the contribution they can usefully make in adult education in a manner appropriate to, and consistent with, their special character and function.

It is, of course, not only in advanced industrial countries that the universities have demonstrated their ability to take a lead in adult education. In many of the 'developing' countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, newly established universities or university colleges have initiated widespread adult education programmes as a first priority, in spite of the pressure on research and internal teaching. It is interesting to note that the Executive Committee of the Indian Adult Education Association at its meeting in New Delhi in the summer of 1960 called upon the universities of India to establish departments of adult education. The committee asked the universities to organize training for adult education workers, and other educational programmes for adults, and to conduct research and studies in the problems of adult education. It asked the University Grants Commission and the Ministry of Education financially to support such universities as were willing to establish adult education departments.

In many cases the pattern of work undertaken by new universities and the methods used have been modelled too closely upon those adopted by institutions with an older tradition, situated in countries with different social needs. In these cases success depends to a great extent upon the actual social and cultural situation in the developing country. As Lionel Elvin pointed out, the attempt to transplant the British pattern of university tutorial classes seemed to meet with success in Ghana but to prove much less successful in Northern Nigeria. His conclusion is that 'the answer must be, in broad terms, that in spite of all the superficial differences there must be enough in common between the social situation in Ghana and that of England in its formative years in adult education to make the same general conception of purposes, and therefore of methods, "take"; whereas in Northern

Nigeria there is a general situation which does not, or does not yet, lend itself fruitfully to the same kind of social-educational movement'.<sup>1</sup> Mistakes have been made in attempting to transfer methods of university adult education from one country to another without due regard to differences in cultural patterns. Nevertheless the adult education work of universities in Africa and the West Indies has demonstrated that the university can make a major contribution in communities at quite different levels of industrial and technical development.

The problem raised by Lionel Elvin, however, is a real one. Universities in quite different communities and in countries at different stages of development are playing a leading part in adult education. There often appears to be, however, a marked difference in levels of work undertaken, in methods used and policies followed, which cannot be explained away merely in terms of differences between the communities they serve. The search is continuing for common principles which broadly should determine the contribution of any university irrespective of where it is located, and irrespective of whether the community it serves is developed, developing or underdeveloped. This was the major theme of the discussions at the World Conference on Adult Education which was held at the University of Syracuse Conference Centre at Sagamore, New York State, immediately after the Unesco conference at Montreal. In so far as conclusions emerged from these discussions and exchanges, the broad general principles which had been put forward earlier by Dr. C. O. Houle seem to express them most satisfactorily. Houle, in a foreword to Unesco's publication *The Universities in Adult Education*, 1953, suggested certain general guiding rules for university policy, covering standards, research and experiment, community leadership, liaison with other agencies, and the need for universities to master adult education as a field of knowledge.

Most of these points need elaboration but they do provide a guide to the trend of university thought and do suggest that universities have a permanent role to play in the general structure of adult education. The university, by its nature and functions, must provide leadership in education and this leadership should be extended to the field of adult education. When the structure of adult education is characterized, as it must be, by a multiplicity of institutions and organizations undertaking responsibility for meeting particular needs, there should be one institution with

1. Lionel Elvin, 'Adult Education: the relation of purpose to methods and of both to society', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 12 (1960), No. 2, Paris, Unesco, p. 80.



the responsibility for seeing the whole rather than the individual parts. It would seem that this task is particularly appropriate to the university. Professor R. D. Waller in an introductory address to the Unesco Regional European Seminar held at Bangor in September 1956, pointed out: 'The job of the universities is to keep this vast scene well lit so that people with good eyesight have some chance of seeing what is happening and deciding what it is best to do.'<sup>1</sup>

It might appear perhaps that too much is being made of the role of the university in the general structure of adult education since in so many countries at the present time the universities play little or no part in it. At Montreal and at Sagamore it became obvious, however, that the need for a more active university participation was becoming urgent. Delegates at Montreal recognized that adult educators must have available the results of scientific research if they were to help adults to understand the effects of accelerating scientific and technological change. A draft recommendation presented by the delegations from France, Rumania, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Finland and the United States of America, stated in its preamble: 'There is no denying that it is becoming increasingly difficult to adjust adult education to the rapid and complex changes of civilization, which are continually giving rise to new problems. The cultural needs of individuals and of society as a whole, the aspirations of the urban and rural populations both in the advanced and the underdeveloped countries, together with the short- and long-term effects of their own work, tend more and more to baffle analysis by those concerned with adult education.'

'To gain a more reliable knowledge of these factors, adult education workers need the assistance of scientific research.'

Much of this research, though not necessarily all, must be undertaken by the universities. As adult education expands, moreover, the number of people entering it as a profession increases, and the need for professional training becomes more pressing. There is need for more research into 'adult education' as a special field of knowledge. In both professional training in adult education and in the research which provides the basis of an academic discipline the university has a big role to play. Mr. E. M. Hutchinson, writing in the spring of 1960, refers to the steps the North American universities are taking to provide academic courses of professional training for adult educators. 'Thirteen professors of adult educa-

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1. *The Universities and Adult Education*, London, HMSO, 1957, p. 6.

tion have assembled annually for the last three years', he writes, 'to try and thrash out the nature of a basic curriculum for professional training, and under the terms of a grant from the Kellogg Foundation they have another two years in which to complete the task. Dr. Essert informed me that his institute at Teachers' College has guided 300 post-graduate students in search of Masters' or Doctors' degrees and that, on a recent check, 150 of them were definitely known to be working in adult education, in many parts of the world as well as in the USA, among them some very distinguished figures. He estimated that at least 25 American universities (including the 13 mentioned above) are now offering such opportunities and that the total number of higher degrees awarded in "adult education" might be of the order of 600. From now on that figure is likely to increase rapidly.'<sup>1</sup>

Apart from all these factors, however, there is one more which inevitably and irresistibly will force the universities to play a leading part in adult education—the level at which adults are likely to seek education in the future. The major effort in 'remedial' education in the industrially advanced countries is to provide all adults who left school for work after the completion of elementary education with opportunities for a full secondary education. This drive is reflected in the 'Colleges of a Second Chance', in the USA; it is reflected in the major adult education programme in the USSR where the whole resources of the community are being mobilized to ensure that all adults shall have at least the opportunity and the encouragement to complete a full course of secondary education. A similar trend exists in most of the other industrialized countries where opportunities for secondary education are provided for adults through evening schools and correspondence courses.

When the remedial tasks are completed, when most advanced countries have the resources to permit universal and compulsory secondary education for all children—when, in fact, the "educated" society Drucker speaks of has arrived—then all adults will have received an educational training up to, and including, university entrance level. An increasing proportion will have attended university. The education sought by an adult population which possesses an educational background equivalent to, or higher than, university entrance level, will almost inevitably be at the level of 'higher education'—the sphere of adult education in which the universities can make the greatest contribution.

1. E. M. Hutchinson, 'Travellers' Tales', in: *Adult Education*, London, National Institute of Adult Education, 1960, p. 252.



#### OTHER INSTITUTIONS

Attention has been drawn (a) to the relative change in the role of the voluntary organization in adult education; (b) to the greater stress upon the urgent necessity for governments to take steps to integrate adult education more closely into the national pattern and systems of education; and (c) to a greater emphasis upon the more effective utilization of the resources of schools, training colleges, universities, and the teaching profession in adult education. It is in these areas that the most marked changes have occurred in attitude and approach in the period between Elsinore and Montreal. For this reason it is appropriate to examine them in greater detail. Such concentration should not be taken as indicating any reduction in importance of the many other institutions and agencies which contribute to adult education. The role of libraries, museums, art galleries, remains as important as ever. As Blakely says, they 'are becoming more aggressive and skilful'<sup>1</sup> in their adult education work. The social organizations, co-operatives, unions, corporations, are more active than ever in organizing adult education programmes, both in the form of in-service training programmes and in partnership with outside educational institutions. Government agencies other than Ministries of Education are involved in educational programmes. An obvious example is agricultural extension. The armed forces, too, are increasingly providing educational programmes for servicemen. In a number of countries education during the period of military service is proving a most important method of remedying educational deficiencies in the young male adult.

There is one other form of institution which should be considered and that is the residential colleges for adults. Residential education for adults has a relatively long history but it has taken a new lease of life over the last 10 or 15 years and evolved along new lines. Residential colleges provide opportunities for concentrated systematic study for periods extending from just a few days, a week or two, up to courses extending over several months. The very fact that the adult attending residential courses is freed for a fixed period from material anxieties and from the cares and responsibilities of family and work, permits more intensive study and more rapid progress. He can 'devote himself entirely to study. He then has time to make use of his intellectual abilities. He can take up the study of a particular problem or situation with the necessary seriousness, concentration and continuity. He can develop

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1. Robert J. Blakely, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

a method of work and receive guidance in his researches. Human relationships are thus intensified in a way hardly possible in the circumstances of everyday life. Moreover, such institutions, when well organized and managed, may introduce their residents to a style of living and a quality of human relations which are among the most valuable experiences they have to offer'.<sup>1</sup>

Reference has already been made to the work of the Scandinavian folk high schools, with their three-month and five-month courses for young farmers and workers. Since the second world war there has been steady growth in short-term residential colleges in the United Kingdom. Similar colleges have grown up throughout North America as Conference Centres or Centres for Continuing Education. In almost all countries concerned with adult education, residential facilities for adults are being established. Administration and staff colleges are being established by government agencies and by industrial, commercial and financial concerns. Residential colleges are being opened by trade unions and national non-governmental organizations. The growing importance of these colleges in adult education is reflected in the regular international conferences which are being held to encourage interchange of ideas and experiences in this special field. One of the peripheral conferences, held just before the Unesco Conference on Adult Education, dealt with residential adult education.

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1. Paul Lengrand, *op. cit.*, p. 97.



## CHAPTER IX

# FORMS AND METHODS OF ADULT EDUCATION

Much was done at Montreal to clarify ideas about the scope and nature of adult education, to define its new tasks, and to make positive proposals for its organization both at national and at international level. On the other hand an examination of the recommendations made in connexion with teaching methods in adult education reveals little that is new or exciting. It may be that it is easier, or more convenient, as Elvin has suggested, to send organizing officers to international conferences than to send those engaged in actual teaching work. In analysing the seminars held at the Centre for Workers' Education at La Brévière in the Forest of Compiègne in France during the summers of 1952 and 1953, he concluded that the results of the meetings indicated that it was 'far easier to promote study of methods of organization than study of methods of teaching'.<sup>1</sup> This may have been for the reason suggested above or it may have been, in his words, 'because it is in any case harder to discuss methods of teaching than it is to discuss the machinery of organization'.<sup>2</sup>

It is doubtful whether the first reason given by Elvin provides the real explanation. Most of the administrative officers sent to the Montreal conference still handled some teaching work, and almost all had graduated from teaching to administrative posts. In many cases their experience and their responsibilities made them better equipped to discuss principles of teaching methods than are individual teachers. Tutors concerned with a special subject field might know a great deal about the teaching of their own subject to an adult group, a knowledge they have acquired by trial and error and through long experience. Their knowledge and experience, however, would not necessarily provide a useful basis for generalization. Experience in teaching literature or economics,

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1. Lionel Elvin, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

2. *ibid.*, p. 79.

for example, might not throw a great deal of light on the most satisfactory methods for teaching adults physics or music. The administrative or organizing officers on the other hand might well be concerned with programmes covering a number of subject areas. Such officers are likely to be more conscious of adult education as a field of knowledge, of adult motivation, of adult learning processes, and as a result are likely to have a better grasp of the principles of adult teaching methods.

'In institutions for training teachers there is a familiar distinction between "general method" (that is to say, methods that it would be wise for any teacher to understand whatever subject he may be teaching) and "special method" (that is to say, methods of teaching any one particular subject, such as mathematics or a foreign language).'<sup>1</sup> Within the field of adult education the teacher or tutor has probably more to say about the 'special method' which is applicable in teaching his own subject to adults than the administrator or the organizing official but not necessarily more to say about 'general method'. Yet within the limitations of an international conference it is discussions of 'general method' that are likely to be more meaningful. There is an urgent need to tap the knowledge of successful methods and techniques appropriate to the teaching of particular subjects, possessed by experienced adult education tutors. Conferences of the type held at Montreal, however, are not the appropriate place.

The delegates at Montreal who were responsible for paying special attention to forms and methods in adult education were aware that methods of education need to be consciously devised in relation to (a) the stage of society existing in a particular country at a given time, and (b) the adult education institutions or organizations which have been established on the basis of a clear understanding of social purposes and existing social norms in such countries. The report of Commission 2 drew attention to this point when it stated: 'The methods used in adult education are extremely varied; they are designed to meet the needs and aspirations of widely differing societies. . . . Looking beyond specific experiments suited to a particular environment and special circumstances, the conference gave its attention to methods likely to be of general interest and applicable to many, if not all, types of society.'<sup>2</sup>

1. Lionel Elvin, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

2. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 14.



## THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE

Commission 2 laid particular emphasis upon the need for teaching methods which involved the active rather than the passive participation of adult students. This is, as the commission pointed out, a most important principle in adult education. In an international conference bringing together adult educators from many countries some of which have only recently started organized education of adults, a reiteration and restressing of the principle of active participation in the learning process is undoubtedly justified and forms part of the useful interchange of experiences and ideas. Yet there is nothing new about the principle itself. It is one which is introduced in almost all adult education work irrespective of the major method used. It does not matter whether this method is apparently formal classroom instruction, or informal study group processes. Audio-visual aids may provide the basic techniques, *or there may be a situation* in which, as in community development programmes, learning is through action; in all cases the need for student participation is recognized. Even the rather academic approach characteristic of the English university tutorial class was influenced from the beginning by a recognition that adults bring to their studies a contribution based upon their experience of life. 'The relation of tutor and student in a university tutorial class—as indeed in any other class of adults—is entirely different', Albert Mansbridge pointed out in 1913, 'from the ordinary relationship of teacher and pupil. The teacher is in real fact a fellow student, and the fellow students are teachers. Humility of spirit and an appreciation of the vast, unexplained reaches of knowledge are at once the inspiration and the vital force of such study, which is always pursued in accordance with the wills and desires of the students. For unless they are vitally interested no group of (adult) students will persist in studying a subject from which they receive no material reward and gain no recognition.'<sup>1</sup>

It is important to recognize the principle of student participation and important to make provision for such active involvement in all adult education courses. Over-emphasis upon the students' contribution, however, can lead to a disregard of the teachers' contribution and concentration upon the method can lead to lack of concern with the content—to a concern with 'techniques' rather than with 'subject matter', with 'group behaviour' rather than with 'individual study' and with attempts to change indivi-

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1. Albert Mansbridge, *University Tutorial Classes*, London, Longmans, Green & Co, 1913.

dual attitudes rather than with the attempt to increase individual knowledge. What is needed is a balanced approach.

#### FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

As we have seen, the term 'fundamental education' was coined because adult education developed in the first place in countries where the majority of the people could read and write, and where non-governmental organizations were a firmly established tradition. When governments in countries where the population was predominantly illiterate (and in which voluntary organizations were either non-existent or weak and inexperienced) came to introduce educational programmes for adults, the definition of 'adult education' as it had emerged in the West seemed inapplicable. Moreover, the need for education in the underdeveloped or developing countries seemed much more closely related to the need for change in attitudes and community practices—to the introduction of sanitation, medical facilities, new roads, new agricultural practices, village industries, co-operatives, etc. Under these circumstances it became difficult to distinguish between fundamental education and community development, and, in fact, in the earlier stages of the fundamental education projects little attempt was made to draw a distinction between the two. The practice did, however, result in some confusion between the work of the educator and the role of the social worker, the agricultural field worker, the district health officer or the rural economist.

There was an obvious need for a clearer definition of the role of education in community development projects and for a further clarification of the term 'further education'. In the *Twentieth Report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to the Economic and Social Council*, an attempt was made to define community development and to indicate the relationship of fundamental education to it. 'The term *community development* has come into international usage', the report pointed out, 'to connote the processes by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.'<sup>1</sup>

The report went on to examine the role of fundamental educa-

1. United Nations, Economic and Social Council, Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, *Twentieth Report*. . . New York, 1956, p. 14.



tion in community development. 'The term (fundamental education)', it stated, 'is generally synonymous with "social education", "mass education" and "community education". It does not mean community development, but it should be regarded as an essential component of community development.'<sup>1</sup>

This rethinking on the part of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies about the nature of community development, and the role of fundamental education in relationship to community development, was paralleled by a rethinking on the part of Unesco itself about the nature of fundamental education. As a result a new definition of 'fundamental education' was adopted at the ninth session of Unesco's General Conference in 1956. This definition stated that:

'Fundamental education aims to help people who have not obtained such help from established educational institutions to understand the problems of their environment and their rights and duties as citizens and individuals, to acquire a body of knowledge and skill for the progressive improvement of their living conditions and to participate more effectively in the economic and social development of their community.'

'Fundamental education seeks, with due regard for religious beliefs, to develop moral values and a sense of the solidarity of mankind.'

'While the object of the school is to educate children, and while "further education" continues education previously acquired in schools, fundamental education is designed to supplement an incomplete school system in economically underdeveloped areas both rural and urban.'<sup>2</sup>

A closer look at the definition and at the relationship between fundamental education and community development reveals that the confusion over the interpretation of the term 'adult education', still existed at the international level in 1956. Apart from the qualification that fundamental education aims to help people who have not obtained the benefit of schooling, therefore excluding those who have, the rest of the definition applies with equal force to 'adult education'. It, too, is concerned with helping people to understand 'the problems of their environment and their rights and duties as citizens and individuals, to acquire a body of knowledge and skill for the progressive improvement of their living conditions, and to participate more effectively in the econo-

1. *ibid.*, p. 18.

2. 'The Scope and Nature of Fundamental Education', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 9 (1957), No. 2, Paris, Unesco, p. 55.

mic and social development of their community'. 'Adult education', too, is concerned with developing moral values and a sense of the solidarity of mankind. Moreover, as we have seen, 'adult education' is also concerned with the remedial education of adults who for various reasons have failed to get an adequate schooling in youth.

In practice fundamental education has been characterized more by its close links with education for community action—by its relation with community development programmes—than by any other special characteristic. But community development programmes are a feature of relatively advanced industrial countries as well as of developing countries, and adult education plays a major role in initiating or assisting such programmes. It is not even that this development in the industrial countries is recent. The work of St. Francis Xavier College in the field of community development and the fostering of co-operation among the fishermen and farmers in Nova Scotia is well known. Many universities in North America play a leading role in initiating or supporting community development programmes through their adult education extension programmes.

Essentially it is the range of work undertaken and the results achieved which count, not the name which is given to the programme. There can be little doubt that fundamental education projects have effectively launched many countries into full-scale adult education programmes. Such fundamental education programmes have also encouraged fresh approaches and new experiments. Experience gained through fundamental education projects in developing countries have proved to possess a relevance even for countries with a relatively long-established tradition in adult education.

It could be argued, however, that the term 'fundamental education' has served its purpose and should be dropped, to be replaced by the term 'adult education' before the division between the two is crystallized in institutional forms.

It seems clear that the developing countries must press ahead with community development schemes which, at the village and district level, form the basic building blocks for the national plans for economic and social development. It is also clear that the success of community development programmes will largely depend upon the extent to which the individuals participating understand the purposes of the projects and the way in which they fit in with the overall development plans of their country. This knowledge and understanding are a result of education. Delegates at Montreal from some of the developing countries



stressed that in many cases community development projects in their countries had proved less successful than expected because the educational side had been neglected and the approach had been based on propaganda for new methods and upon official instruction. Margaret Mead has written rather scathingly of this type of fundamental education.

'As in the earlier form (adult education), the sense of urgency (in fundamental education)', she wrote, 'rested with the superior group who were outraged at the low levels of literacy, nutrition, and medical care found in the villages. Considering how much work was required to find community leaders able finally to awaken community participation, the rationale of the whole process seems more than a little suspect. A tremendous amount of waste motion was involved because the new techniques—modern latrines, modern methods of cultivation, modern methods of handling credit—were introduced without recognition of the importance of grounding them in the culture of the recipients.'<sup>1</sup>

The scale of the projects, the lack of adequately trained staff, the sense of urgency, would all combine to produce many of the weaknesses referred to by Margaret Mead. Yet much has been accomplished, and with growing experience and greater skill much more can be achieved in the next decade. The significant fact is that community development programmes to be successful will require more rather than less assistance from adult education. Fundamental education must be integrated into the total adult education programme of a country and not seen as something 'related to but distinguishable from adult education'.<sup>2</sup>

#### MASS MEDIA OF EDUCATION

Both the urgency and the size of the educational problem facing the world were bound to lead to an examination of the potentialities of the mass media of communication as methods which could be used in adult education. The delegates at Elsinore were perplexed at the way in which these media could be used by unscrupulous authority to hypnotize and drug the man in the street and to bar serious thought and rational judgement. Yet, wisely used, they were a method of reaching audiences of a size far beyond the reach of any other method used by adult education.

1. Margaret Mead, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

2. International Conference on Adult Education, Elsinore, 1949, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

They were neutral techniques and their value or danger depended upon the use to which they were put. They could not be regarded as educational themselves, but the influence they exert on the whole population could be, if it were used both consciously and wisely.

Edward Hutchinson refers to some comments of Mr. J. Trenaman, BBC Liaison Officer for Further Education, which draw a distinction between what the mass media of communication can and cannot do in educating the adult population. 'It seems important', wrote Trenaman, 'to distinguish between the transmission of culture and the extension of education. The former, as a gradual enrichment of the climate of thought and behaviour, does take place. The great enlargement of the music-loving public, the wider understanding of economic, social and public truths, the taste for "contemporary" fashions and furnishings, are evidence of a cultural change. Despite the resistances of attitude, many ideas, words, forms, fashions, and even accents that radiate from the top (or, more correctly, from the centre, for they are not necessarily the same), seep down through the whole community. When standards are respected (as in the public library service or in BBC broadcasting), such influences are constructive; others are destructive and degrading, and often reinforce the resistances.' Hutchinson goes on to say: 'Many of these cultural influences could also be described as educational, but one must recognize the parallel need for an extension of a more thorough knowledge, systematically organized, both specialized and general, the outcome of disciplined, progressive study, which is more properly termed "education".'<sup>1</sup>

It has been suggested that films, radio and television tend to be ephemeral in their impact. This quality should not be overstressed. An interesting experiment was conducted through the collaboration of the University of Toronto and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. A group of undergraduates studying anthropology were used to test the results of different teaching methods including radio and television. 'The students were divided into four groups, matched for performance in academic work, and each group was placed in a separate room. One group heard the lecture as delivered, a second by radio, a third over a television, and a fourth studied it in the printed form. At the conclusion the students wrote a half-hour examination consisting mainly of multiple-choice questions of fact, plus one essay-type question. There was ample time, and so it was a test of power, not of speed. Those who had

1. E. M. Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 101.



received the message by television had the highest scores on the test.<sup>1</sup> A further test was given eight months later and, although there had been a marked loss in marks scored, the further test did demonstrate that the students receiving communication by television and radio had not only learnt more but had also retained more than those who had been subject to the more conventional lecturing or learning methods. Not too much should be made of the results, for the test was on one special subject, the numbers involved were small, they were not a normal adult group nor were the learning conditions normal. Nevertheless, the experiment did indicate that the mass media of communication, particularly television, are effective channels for carrying information.

The success of these methods, even in this small experiment, suggest that the methods are effective if consciously used by the learners. The effectiveness of the 'radio school of the air' for teaching of children in isolated districts both in Australia and New Zealand has demonstrated the usefulness of radio when it is tied in with a planned study programme at the receiver end. The 170,000 or more radio school groups for adults in Colombia, organized by the Accion Cultural Popular, are a similar example of the effectiveness of radio. Working through their radio station, Radio Sutatenza, classes in reading, writing, civics, hygiene, history and community development are organized. Receiving sets are sold to the peasants at cost price and installed in the home of an educated member of the village where the school is held. This person is given the title of *auxilier inmediato* and is responsible for keeping the attendance roll and for writing the lessons on the blackboard as instructed by the radio.

The use of radio in this way is limited, however, to organized instruction. There is little stress upon discussion or student participation. A more advanced use is when radio, television or films are tied in with organized group discussions. The classic example of the successful welding of radio and adult study groups is, of course, the Canadian Farm Forum. Organized almost twenty years ago, the programme has continued without a break under the auspices of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Association of Adult Education and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Once a week throughout the winter all over Canada, groups of neighbouring farmers and members of their families meet together to listen to and discuss broadcasts on agricultural topics and rural problems. 'By providing expert information on such

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1. J. R. Kidd, *How Adults Learn*, New York, Association Press, 1959, p. 211-12.

topics and encouraging discussion of the broadcasts by neighbours, the Forum aims not only at improving farm practices and farmers' lives, but also at strengthening and, if necessary, restoring the co-operative spirit in rural communities. The subjects are presented in dramatized form, often with professional actors, or as interviews, panel discussions, speeches, reviews of Forum opinion or as a combination of two or more of these methods, variety being a major concern of the organizers. The *Farm Forum Guide* is distributed regularly, containing detailed information on the next broadcast, issues to be discussed, lists of books, brochures and films on the subject and short news items on the activities of the Forum and other happenings of interest to farmers.<sup>1</sup> Similar organized radio group listening programmes have been introduced by All-India Radio in Bombay State.

The work of the French film discussion clubs and tele-clubs is well known and the experimental work undertaken there has been tried in other countries. More than 5,000 tele-clubs have been organized in Italy while a most interesting and successful experiment with a television-discussion group project has been made in Japan. The latter experiment covered 60 villages. It was concerned with the reactions of rural people to programmes dealing with the transformation of rural life, but it was also interested in their reactions to telecasts in general and towards organized discussion meetings. The general results emphasized that television can be of great value in pulling villages out of their isolation, that the televised programmes create general interest through the process of group discussion and in many cases lead to community action.

The value of television programmes tied to courses of individual study has been demonstrated in a number of countries. The greatest advance in such television and radio courses has occurred in North America but radio study programmes have also proved very successful even in such developing countries as Malaya.

In general, however, film, radio and television programmes are not only expensive to organize, but are particularly suited to providing entertainment. Both these qualities lead towards their commercial exploitation, and towards a stress on the entertainment side rather than upon their more direct educational possibilities. Yet in the modern world these mass media are the constant companions of the average man. One of the problems facing adult education today is the need to see that the educational

1. 'The Use of Audio-Visual Media in Fundamental and Adult Education', in: *Fundamental and Adult Education*, Vol. 11 (1959), No. 1, Paris, Unesco, p. 45.



and entertainment potentialities of mass media are not separated into completely water tight compartments. As J. C. Mathur, Director-General of All-India Radio, pointed out in his address to the delegates at Montreal, the widening gulf between popular entertainment and adult education will be disastrous for both culture and education even though such a separation at first glance may appear to leave both parties completely free to do their own job in their own way. 'All attempts at collaboration among experts in different domains', he said, 'bristle with problems, resistance and mental reservations. But the spirit of accommodation, the capacity for tolerance, the desire to understand the point of view of others—these are the very values which adult education seeks to promote in its subjects. Could we not make a beginning with ourselves?

'I would not be so unrealistic as to assume that in Western countries educationists can easily gain admission to the directive circles of commercialized popular entertainment. But what about underdeveloped countries? This is no place for discussing the merits and demerits of advertising on the radio and television. But I come from an underdeveloped country, and I am amazed at the indifference of educationists and leaders of thought in underdeveloped countries to the vital problem of whether the media of mass communication should, in the face of cultural instability in these countries, be allowed to be exploited by commercial interests. I am further disturbed by the tendency of the governments of these countries to use radio and television as a source of revenue through advertising, thus avoiding the financial burden of promoting these media for educational purposes. Little do they realize that once people in these countries become accustomed to mere light entertainment, it is going to be extremely difficult to win them back to serious and educational programmes.

'I cannot suggest a solution to this problem but the crisis is serious and the challenge unmistakable.'<sup>1</sup>

Recognizing the significance of the points made by Mr. Mathur, the delegates in Commission 2 recommended that 'adult educators attach due importance to the influence of mass media, stimulate critical appreciation and discrimination among the public, and collaborate closely with those who control the mass media in their utilization for the broad purposes of adult education'.<sup>2</sup>

1. J. C. Mathur, 'The Use of Audio-Visual Media for the Education of Adults in a Changing World', in: *International Journal of Adult and Youth Education*, Vol. 13 (1961), No. 1-2, Paris Unesco, p. 33.

2. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, op. cit., p. 17.

The conference in endorsing recommendations for the reorganization of the Consultative Committee on Adult Education suggested that Unesco, when considering representation from major agencies of adult education, should give particular attention to the agencies concerned with mass media of communication.



## CHAPTER X

### CONCLUSION

At various stages throughout this study we have referred to the Final Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction of the United Kingdom (1919), or the '1919 Report' as it has come to be called. This was almost inevitable, for the 'report' represents one of the greatest single contributions to the literature of adult education. For four decades it has influenced the thinking of adult educators throughout the English-speaking world and beyond. Many of the delegates who attended either the Elsinore or the Montreal conference echoed, consciously or unconsciously, the convictions which had been put forward so clearly and forcibly by the committee in its famous report.

It is true that the report was concerned with adult education in one country, Great Britain. 'The field of historical survey is British; the traditions on which the argument rests, the institutions, organizations and educational structure which are the general framework of reference are all British.'<sup>1</sup> Yet so wide is its scope, and so coherent its philosophic unity, that what it has to say about adult education has a validity for countries all over the world.

Nevertheless, it is a national rather than an international document. It brought together in one unified charter the achievements of several generations of adult educators in one country, 'arranging, interpreting and elaborating them in the spacious pattern which with rare optimism it projected into the future'.<sup>2</sup>

There are few references in the report to adult education in other countries but passing allusion to international contacts and co-operation. The period which has elapsed since its publication has been characterized, however, by the steady development of organized adult education in almost all countries in the world,

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1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction. Adult Education Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 24.  
2. *ibid.*, p. 16.

and, particularly since 1945, by the rapid development of international consultation and co-operation in this field.

Professor R. D. Waller, in an essay on 'The Years Between' printed as an introduction to the reprint of the '1919 Report', drew attention to these new developments. 'However, one happy result of the second world breakdown', he wrote, 'was the rapid spread of international contacts in adult education. They had, of course, begun before 1919; there are a few references to them in the report and a very summary survey of adult education abroad. The World Association for Adult Education, now unhappily defunct, was born just before the report (March 1919). But how small a part comparatively the international field then played! The Committee for Intellectual Co-operation was a useful but very modest forerunner of Unesco. The world of adult education is rapidly becoming one, and few of us are without some knowledge of what is going on in other countries and of the great advances made by fundamental education and community projects in backward areas—work which often throws surprising new light on our own. This vast world arena makes the field of the "1919 Report" seem almost parochial; and it is now possible that in the world arena we may rediscover our old purposes and renew them in fresh adventures.'<sup>1</sup>

In the sense of the unity revealed and breadth of vision displayed in speeches and discussions at Montreal it became evident that adult educators were rediscovering at the international level 'old purposes' and a moral sense of high mission and adventure. To adult educators of the present and of future generations, the report of the 1960 Montreal conference may well stand as a landmark in the literature of international adult education as important and significant in its own way as is the '1919 Report' in the adult education literature of a single country. It is true that there cannot be any exact parallel, for adult education has become too extensive and many-sided to fit easily into a single report. The '1919 Report' was prepared by a relatively small committee working together over a relatively long period of time. The report of the Montreal conference, on the other hand, must remain a summing-up of the views of almost two hundred delegates and observers meeting for the brief space of ten days. Under such circumstances it would be impossible for the Montreal report to possess either the literary style or the philosophical unity of the '1919 Report'. As A. Basdevant, rapporteur of the conference,

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1. Great Britain, Ministry of Reconstruction, Adult Education Committee, *op. cit.*, p. 31.



pointed out in his report, 'The questions before the conference were of very wide scope, which explains why the answers may not always seem to have the detailed precision that might be wished. Vast, indeed, were the problems to be solved and, in the view of the conference, it is at more highly specialized meetings that a solution to them will be found.'<sup>1</sup>

Yet within the limitations of a conference of this type a charter for adult education at the international level was drafted, and the philosophy which had inspired it was summed up with vision and force in the general declaration which was approved and adopted by the whole conference. The Montreal declaration provides a fitting conclusion to a study devoted to adult education, its nature and tasks, in a rapidly changing world.

'The destruction of mankind and the conquest of space have both become technological possibilities to our present generation. These are the most dramatic forms of technological development, but they are not the only ones. New industrial methods, new means of communication are affecting all parts of the world, and industrialization and urbanization are overtaking areas that 20 years ago were rural and agricultural. Nor are the changes which are going to fashion the pattern of our lives during the remainder of this century only in technology. In great areas of the world the population is increasing fast, new national States are emerging, and much of the world has become divided, within the last few years, into rival camps. Every generation has its own problems; in sober fact no previous generation has been faced with the extent and rapidity of change which faces and challenges us.

'Our first problem is to survive. It is not a question of the survival of the fittest; either we survive together, or we perish together. Survival requires that the countries of the world must learn to live together in peace. "Learn" is the operative word. Mutual respect, understanding, sympathy are qualities that are destroyed by ignorance, and fostered by knowledge. In the fields of international understanding, adult education in today's divided world takes on a new importance. Provided that man learns to survive, he has in front of him opportunities for social development and personal well-being such as have never been open to him before.

'The rapidly developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America have their own special problems. For them, adult education, including education for literacy, is an immediate need, a need so overpowering that here and now we must help adult men

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1. World Conference on Adult Education, Montreal, 1960, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

and women to acquire the knowledge and the skills that they need for the new patterns of community living into which they are moving. These developing countries have few immediately available resources, and great demands on them.

'The countries which are better off have an opportunity of helping those which are poorer; they have the opportunity of performing such an act of wisdom, justice and generosity as could seize the imagination of the whole world. With their help illiteracy could be eradicated within a few years, if, preferably through the United Nations and its agencies, a resolute, comprehensive and soundly planned campaign were undertaken. We believe profoundly that this is an opportunity which ought to be seized.

'But it is not only in the developing countries that adult education is needed. In the developed countries the need for vocational and technical training is increasingly accepted, but that is not enough. Healthy societies are composed of men and women, not of animated robots, and there is a danger, particularly in the developed countries, that the education of adults may get out of balance by emphasizing too much vocational needs and technical skills. Man is a many-sided being, with many needs. They must not be met piecemeal and in adult education programmes they must all be reflected. Those powers of mind and those qualities of spirit which have given to mankind an abiding heritage of values and judgement must continue everywhere to find, in our changing patterns of day-to-day living, full scope for maturing and flowering in an enriched culture. This and nothing less is the goal of adult education.

'We believe that adult education has become of such importance for man's survival and happiness that a new attitude towards it is needed. Nothing less will suffice than that people everywhere should come to accept adult education as a normal, and that governments should treat it as a necessary, part of the educational provision of every country.'<sup>1</sup>

1. *ibid.*, p. 8-9.



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